

Concordia University St. Paul
DigitalCommons@CSP

CUP Ed.D. Dissertations

Concordia University Portland Graduate
Research

11-1-2018

Teachers' Experiences in Urban Turnaround Schools: A Phenomenological Study

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta
Concordia University - Portland, holstedn@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/cup_commons_grad_edd



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ciancetta, N. H. (2018). *Teachers' Experiences in Urban Turnaround Schools: A Phenomenological Study* (Thesis, Concordia University, St. Paul). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/cup_commons_grad_edd/242

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia University Portland Graduate Research at DigitalCommons@CSP. It has been accepted for inclusion in CUP Ed.D. Dissertations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@CSP. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csp.edu.

11-2018

Teachers' Experiences in Urban Turnaround Schools: A Phenomenological Study

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta
Concordia University - Portland

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.cu-portland.edu/edudissertations>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

CU Commons Citation

Ciancetta, Nicole Holsted, "Teachers' Experiences in Urban Turnaround Schools: A Phenomenological Study" (2018). *Ed.D. Dissertations*. 174.
<https://commons.cu-portland.edu/edudissertations/174>

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Theses & Dissertations at CU Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Ed.D. Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CU Commons. For more information, please contact libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu.

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE,
CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ AND APPROVE THE DISSERTATION OF

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Barbara Weschke, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Catherine Beck, Ed.D, Content Specialist

Amanda Sailors, Ph.D., Content Reader

Teachers' Experiences in Urban Turnaround Schools: A Phenomenological Study

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Transformational Leadership

Barbara Weschke, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Catherine Beck, Ed.D, Content Specialist

Amanda Sailors, Ph.D., Content Reader

Concordia University–Portland

2018

Abstract

This phenomenological study explored teachers' lived experiences in relation to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the workplace. The study sought to uncover the phenomenon of teacher retention regarding the workplace, specifically in an urban turnaround school environment, and sought to understand teachers' lived experiences and why they have remained in the urban turnaround environment. All participants had at least four years of experience and had taught in urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. A phenomenological approach made it possible to understand multiple lived experiences, commonalities within these experiences, common factors among teachers' lived experiences, and gain an in-depth understanding of teacher retention. The findings uncovered the following themes: challenges in urban turnaround schools, overcoming challenges, teacher involvement, flexibility, self-care, students, support inside and outside of the workplace, and teachers' passion for entering into teaching. Also, the educational themes of the relational cultural theory consisted of the essential elements of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. The results and findings of this study confirmed that the essential elements of the relational cultural theory commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate contributed to teacher retention through describing the importance of these elements and, the significance they have on teacher retention. The study revealed the benefits of the essential elements.

Keywords: experienced teachers, teacher retention, phenomenology, commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, climate

Dedication

Praise and glory to God, my Lord and Savior. Thank you for walking beside me and being present throughout this journey. A special thanks and dedication to my family and friends who have been encouraging throughout this journey. To my husband Victor Edward, thank you for your unconditional love, optimism, countless hours of support, and sense of humor throughout this journey. I am thankful that we shared this journey through all stages of our relationship every step of the way. To my father William Greg, thank you for always believing in me and encouraging me to continue my educational journey. To my grandmother Dorothy “Bear Bear”, thank you for your amazing support and uplifting words. I thank you for always saying, “Do not worry, pray about it.” Also, to my dog Johnny Boy, who has been by my side throughout this journey. I cannot thank you enough for taking breaks with me to go on runs and walks, and for your supportive paws. Thank you to everyone else who has supported me in this journey, especially my colleagues who come to work every day with a positive attitude of changing students’ lives. In addition, this dissertation is dedicated to all of my students, thank you for your inspiration.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Barbara Weschke, my committee chair and advisor. Thank you, I am sincerely grateful for your guidance, feedback, and time throughout the entirety of this journey. I really appreciate your flexibility, words of encouragement, and always being there to answer my questions. Also, I would like to acknowledge my additional committee members, Dr. Catherine Beck and Dr. Amanda Sailors. Dr. Beck and Dr. Sailors, thank you for your time, feedback, and support throughout this milestone. Also, I would like to acknowledge my editor, thank you for your help and support throughout this milestone.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Tables	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Introduction to the Problem	1
Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem.....	2
Conceptual Framework for the Problem.....	7
Statement of the Problem.....	8
Purpose of the Proposed Study	9
Research Questions	10
Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Proposed Study	11
Definition of Terms.....	12
Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations.....	13
Summary	15
Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
Introduction to the Literature Review	17
Conceptual Framework	19
Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature.....	22
Review of Methodology and Methodological Issues.....	54
Synthesis of Research Findings	59
Critique of Previous Research	62

Chapter 2 Summary	65
Chapter 3: Methodology	68
Introduction.....	68
Research Questions.....	70
Purpose and Design of the Proposed Study	71
Research Population and Sampling Method	73
Instrumentation	74
Data Collection	76
Identification of Attributes.....	79
Data Analysis Procedures	79
Limitations of the Research Design.....	83
Validation.....	83
Credibility	83
Dependability.....	83
Expected Findings.....	84
Ethical Issues	84
Conflict of Interest Assessment	87
Researcher's Position	88
Ethical Issues in the Proposed Study	88
Chapter 3 Summary	89
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results.....	90
Introduction.....	90
Description of Sample.....	93

Research Methodology and Analysis.....	98
Summary of the Findings.....	106
Presentation of the Data and Results	107
Chapter 4 Summary	126
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion	128
Introduction.....	128
Summary of the Results	129
Discussion of the Results	132
Discussion of Results in Relation to the Literature	146
Limitation.....	150
Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory	151
Recommendations for Further Research.....	154
Conclusion	155
References.....	157
Appendix A: Participant Questionnaire	166
Appendix B: Interview Protocol Script.....	167
Appendix C: Interview Log	170
Appendix D: Consent Form.....	171
Appendix E: Participant Demographics.....	173
Appendix F: Representation of Participant Responses of RCT.....	174
Appendix G: Statement of Original Work	175

List of Tables

Table 1. <i>Participant Demographics</i>	173
Table 2. <i>Representation of Participant Responses of RCT</i>	174

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

Teaching is an important profession and is considered to be one that is the most necessary; however, changes and challenges within teaching have resulted in attrition and lack of retention within the educational workplace. Teacher turnover has increased at an alarming rate and each year the percentage of teacher leaving the teaching profession increases. The number of teachers leaving, also known as “teacher leavers,” leave their respective school or the teaching field altogether has increased significantly over the last five years from 2011-2016 (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016). In 2014, at least 15% of teachers left the field of teaching (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016). Additionally, many more teachers are leaving their respective teaching environments within their first three years or between their fourth and fifth year of teaching (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). In urban schools more specifically, in urban turnaround schools, about 40% of teachers leave within the first three years at a turnaround school (Hughes, Matt, & O’Reilly, 2015; Jacob, Vidyarthi, & Carroll, 2012; You & Conley, 2015), which is lowering the retention rate dramatically.

Teacher turnover has doubled yearly, and many more teachers are leaving their respective teaching environment within four to five years (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). These concerns are problematic and continue to be pertinent research topics. The review of the literature explored many factors that contribute to teacher attrition among novice and experienced teachers; in particular, these factors consisted of excessive and demanding working conditions, which included long working hours, lack of leadership support, lack of teacher investment, limited teacher autonomy, and insufficient teacher collaboration. These factors have affected the school teachers both personally and professionally. However, a limited amount of

literature has focused on factors that lead to teacher retention (Bennett, Brown, Kirby-Smith, & Severson, 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Tricarico, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015). Also, a limited amount of literature has focused on experienced teachers who have at least four years of experience and who have remained in teaching in urban schools, especially turnaround schools (Cucchiara, Rooney, & Robertson-Kraft, 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014).

Additional studies need to be conducted to better understand teacher retention. More conversations focused on how to sustain a consistent teaching environment are needed (Neumerski, 2013). This study explored teacher retention in urban turnaround schools with a direct focus pertaining to the essential elements of the relational cultural theory (Doney, 2013; McCauley, 2013).

Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem

Researchers have studied the effects of teacher attrition in the educational environment (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Jones, 2016; Knell & Castro, 2014; Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017; Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015). Teacher attrition causes further issues schoolwide due to teachers leaving, while retaining teachers may help to overcome, and potentially eliminate problematic issues (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017; Ford & Ware, 2016; Jacob et al., 2012; Saiti, 2015). These problematic issues consisted of, but were not limited to, broken relationships, increased student-to-teacher ratios, declines in student academic achievement, minimal teacher collaboration, and limited professional-development opportunities, teacher morale, and an unsustainable school culture and climate. Due to these issues, novice teachers' and experienced teachers' working conditions are negatively affected (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Jacob et al., 2012; Ronfeldt, 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2017).

Researchers have studied novice teachers and experienced teachers, and this research is pertinent in the research topics of attrition and retention. Teachers are considered to be novice teachers between their first and their third year of teaching. Experienced teachers have completed at least four years of teaching (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). Novice teachers and experienced teachers have been influenced by similar satisfactions and dissatisfactions, and as a result, teachers have either left the workplace or remained in the workplace (Bennett et al., 2013; Gaikhorst, Beishuizen, Roosenboom, & Volman, 2017; Martin, Buelow, & Hoffman, 2015; Nichols, Schutz, Rodgers, & Bilica, 2017; You & Conley, 2015). Some factors that have been a satisfaction, and that have influenced both novice teachers to remain in the workplace consisted of collaboration among peers, and administrative and peer support (Bennett et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Some factors that have been a dissatisfaction, and that have influenced novice teachers to leave the workplace have consisted of conditions in the workplace, which include but are not limited to, lack of respect, long working hours (time commitments), lack of administration, and job dissatisfaction. Among novice teachers, 46% leave within their first few years, and, as a result of novice teachers leaving, there have been few studies focused on experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban schools (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014) due to this decreased population of experienced teachers. Experienced teachers were impacted as well as a result of the working conditions, especially the time commitments.

Other factors that have influenced experienced teachers consisted of more responsibilities, and the challenges of technology. Additional responsibilities and technology are constantly evolving and have become important within urban turnaround schools within the district. With these additional responsibilities and technology, the working conditions become

more excessive, and as a result may require additional working hours. Therefore, answers need to be found to determine and understand how to ensure that teachers are supported within their respective workplaces and how schools can make the necessary transformation to retain teachers.

Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, and Bush-Mecenas (2016) focused on school reconstitution and the elements of the known turnaround school model. School reconstitution is only needed if a school fails to meet Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). President Obama signed ESSA in 2015, which included criteria such as academic progress or the failure of a school to meet long-term and short-term goals. The criteria for meeting ESSA vary from state to state; however, these criteria may include student attendance rates, standardized test results focused on student growth and attainment, the school culture and climate, and graduation rates. Rather than permanently closing a low-performing “failing school” that continues not to show progress within ESSA, the turnaround school model has been implemented in order to transform low-performing schools by further addressing the issues schoolwide (Reyes & Garcia, 2014).

The turnaround school model is implemented in a rapid and intentional way. One of the first steps to this reconstitution requires replacing the current staff with new, specifically selected teachers, principals, and additional staff members to create a new learning environment; however, prior staff can reapply for their jobs if they would like. Regarding the process of rehiring existing prior staff, rehiring is limited to 50% regarding prior teachers (Cucchiara et al., 2013). The recruitment process is selective and intentional with turnaround school placement of staff to ensure a positive change to the culture, climate, and relationships within the school. Following the selective recruitment process, turnaround schools receive an abundance of resources, which consist of few curriculums, technology, and school supplies. All expectations

and procedures are applied throughout school to create a consistent and collaborative school culture and climate (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014; Strunk et al., 2016).

Although the turnaround school model has good intentions for a consistent and collaborative school culture and climate, its demands may or may not surpass attainable and consistent schoolwide goals, which can negatively impact overall long-term successes (Strunk et al., 2016). The working conditions in turnaround schools may be intense and excessive (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014). Teachers have no autonomy as they do not have the ability to develop their own instruction and make their own classroom decisions. The teachers within the turnaround school model are to use only the prescribed curriculum. Strict mandates are placed on what can and must be included inside of the classroom, such as, curtains, a living plant, a lamp, anchor charts stating expectations, silent signal procedures, voice levels signals, and implementation of a schoolwide behavior management system. The ultimate goal of these mandates is to ensure each classroom mirrors another and provides for a sense of uniformity throughout the school and district (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014; Strunk et al., 2016).

The turnaround school personnel create a checklist that is based on strict mandates, and this checklist is used to critique teachers. Principal leadership and visitors from the district frequently stop by teachers' classrooms on a continual basis to observe the respective turnaround teachers, and, based upon their performance, these teachers are either celebrated or criticized. These frequent visits place stressors and pressures on the turnaround school teachers and may disrupt the teaching environment, which may cause teachers to leave due to the working conditions (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014; Strunk et al., 2016). Cucchiara et al. (2013) found that the majority of turnaround school teachers are leaving within their first three

years on a consistent basis, as a result of the stressors and pressures of the schools' working conditions.

Furthermore, teachers use these checklists, frequent visitations, and critiques as a resource to guide their teaching practice and learning. If necessary, based upon these resources, teachers should request additional support; however, this is often not the case. Teachers should feel they are being supported as this is vital to creating strong relationships within the school and the district.

Existing research revealed that trusting and committed relationships are a result of positive collaboration, thus collaboration makes it possible to overcome unexpected changes and challenges in the workplace (Brezicha et al., 2015; Gu, 2014). Relationships among leadership, teachers, and staff are vital to teacher support in the workplace. Both relationships and support are significant and are intertwined within the existing research. A supportive relationship is needed to foster growth and development to ensure teacher support (Brezicha, Bergmark, & Mitra, 2015; Gu, 2014). Relationships are vital to teacher retention, and when animosity threatens relationships, it depletes and threatens morale. Furthermore, relationships not only support teachers, but they also are influential to teachers' work attitudes. Relationships in the work environment have a direct influence on teachers' decisions to leave or remain in the workplace (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017).

Overall, relationships have an influence on the turnaround process, school environment, and teacher retention (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Strunk et al., 2016). Research revealed that more than half of turnaround teachers leave their current turnaround school within the first three years; this produces further problems to the school development and meeting educational achievement goals (Reyes & Garcia, 2014). When the turnaround school environment is inconsistent, the

turnaround school strategy does not have a transformational effect and has a higher likelihood of wavering from its transformational focus and mission. The stressors and pressures related to frequent visits from leadership and visitors from the district weaken relationships within the educational environment in urban turnaround schools. This problem still exists because teacher turnover and teacher retention are major concerns. A gap exists in the literature related to understanding the attributes that promote teacher retention, especially in urban turnaround schools.

Conceptual Framework for the Problem

The relational cultural theory (RCT) is the building of connections to grow, foster, and develop relationships. RCT is dependent on growth-fostering relationships (McCauley, 2013). Growth-fostering relationships occur due to human development of connections (McCauley, 2013). The focus of this theory is to develop growth-fostering relationships that are considered to be healthy among human beings and embedded within the RCT are five elements that are used to grow and foster relationships. The five essential elements of the RCT are the following:

Sense of zest or energy; increased sense of worth; clarity, which is knowledge of self and others in a relationship; productivity, which is taking action inside and outside of the relationship; and desire for more connection, which is seeking additional relational experiences. (McCauley, 2013, p. 2)

These components are important to growing and developing healthy relationships and are steps in the pathway to mutual development and connections in the workplace (McCauley, 2013).

Existing literature found that human relationships were improved, as a result of the implementation of the five essential elements of RCT within the social work and psychology

environments (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa, Chiarelli-Helminiak, Hodge, & Wells-Wilbon, 2015; East & Roll, 2015).

This researcher's study focused on specific educational themes gathered from reframing the five essential elements of the relational-cultural theory, and whether or not they have an influence on teachers' experiences of remaining in the workplace, which may contribute to teacher retention. The educational criteria for reframing the five essential elements of RCT consist of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. These five essential elements and their relationship to the educational workplace within urban turnaround schools will be explored to better understand through teachers' lived experiences how to retain experienced teachers.

Research has demonstrated prior RCT implementation has been significant as RCT has reduced negative interactions and fostered the development of growing positive relationships in both the social work and psychology environments (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). RCT has developed and has been interpreted in many ways since its introduction (Miller, 1976). This theory originally focused only on women developing and making connections based on their daily occurrences; however, as a result of the theory's successes the theory has expanded to include both male and female. RCT addresses the importance of relationships and was used in this researcher's study as the framework to explore teachers' lived experiences, and the possibility to improve teacher retention as it may contribute to specific factors of teacher retention.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined problems related to the low-rate of teacher retention in urban turnaround schools in a city in the Midwest due to many unknown factors and explored factors

that contribute to teacher retention, in order to combat the problem of the low rate of teacher retention in urban turnaround schools. Also, it is not known if and how the relational cultural theory may contribute to teacher retention. A gap exists in the literature related to understanding the attributes that influence teacher retention in urban turnaround schools. Another gap exists in the literature related to the further investigation of teachers' daily experiences within urban turnaround school workplaces (Cucchiara et al., 2013). For this reason, an in-depth exploration of what factors experienced teachers attribute to teacher retention and how these factors may have been influential to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools is vital. By investigating teachers' experiences about factors that led to their decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools, the goal of this researcher's study was to highlight attributes in the workplaces that could decrease the high rates of teacher turnover and improve teacher retention. This exploration uncovered specific attributes to teacher retention to promote teachers remaining in the workplaces. In addition, this exploration may be used to further understand how these specific attributes can be implemented in the workplace. As a result of implementation, the specific attributes may be used as a pathway for next steps to remediate and continue to improve teacher retention.

Purpose of the Proposed Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore teachers' perceptions based on their lived experiences in relation to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the educational workplace. Also, this study collected in-depth information pertaining to how factors in the workplace have influenced experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools. During the study, the seven participants were teaching in a

city in the Midwest in diverse grade levels and subject areas across five urban elementary turnaround schools located in one district. These participants had at least four years of teaching experience to qualify as an experienced teacher for this study. Additionally, this study may be significant because few studies focused on teachers who have remained in the workplace, specifically experienced teachers in urban turnaround schools, and how the factors have influenced their decisions of remaining in the workplace (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Reyes & Garcia, 2014).

RCT and its essential elements, which consist of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate as it pertains to teachers' lived experiences, may have assisted the research participants in understanding why they chose to remain in their current workplaces (Doney, 2013; McCauley, 2013). The essential elements of the RCT are based on the outcome of reframing the five essential elements into educational criteria. Teachers sharing their lived experiences were based on their experiences of remaining in urban turnaround schools, which was important to understanding why teachers choose to remain or leave their current schools. Also, it may effectively provide an additional understanding on how to minimize teacher attrition in these urban environments, thus promoting teacher retention.

Research Questions

The study explored the following research questions:

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

R₂: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Proposed Study

This study's goal was to bring informative insight on how to retain teachers in urban turnaround schools through exploration of the criteria gathered from reframing the five essential elements of RCT and if and how they may contribute to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools. This study may help to remediate the problem of teacher attrition and teacher retention by providing next steps in which RCT may be implemented into the education environment. Also, the study may bring awareness of teachers' lived experiences, what causes them to remain in their current workplace, and what they deem is further needed to retain teachers in urban turnaround school environments. This study may be important to urban schools, urban turnaround schools, principal leaders, teacher leaders, superintendents, additional urban turnaround school personnel, and academic leaders to gather and understand important components of retaining experienced teachers. This study may be essential to promoting a positive and sustaining culture and climate in schools among all personnel as a means to grow, foster, and develop relationships in the educational workplace of the schools. Many studies focused on the attributes of teacher turnover, and shared perceptions from novice teachers and principal leaders in regards to turnover and retention; however, limited studies have focused on what is attributed to teacher retention, more specifically how to retain teachers, and a limited amount of studies have focused on the positives pertaining to experienced teachers (Bennett et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2015; Nichols et al., 2017; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2017; You & Conley, 2015). Furthermore, this study provided the opportunity for experienced

teachers to share their lived experiences, and how their shared lived experiences can assist to decrease teacher attrition and promote teacher retention.

Definition of Terms

Attrition/turnover. In this study, attrition or turnover is defined as teachers leaving the teaching field (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016).

Commitment. Commitment, in this study, is a teacher's energy, which further consists of his or her involvement inside and outside of the workplace (You & Conley, 2015).

Culture and climate. Culture and climate, in this study, consist of elements that are reflective of schoolwide relationships and a desire to develop and connect schoolwide (Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2016).

Experienced teachers. In this study, experienced teachers are those who have been teaching for a minimum of four years (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014).

Irreplaceable. In this study, irreplaceables are urban school teachers with exceptional teaching qualities that include, experienced teaching, quality instruction, and strong cultures of respect are deemed to be prosperous and cannot be replaced (Jacob et al., 2012).

Leadership. For the purpose of this study, leadership in this study takes action by providing support and direction inside and outside of the relationship (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016).

Novice teachers. In this study, a novice teacher is one who has been teaching for 1-3 years (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016).

Participants. In this study, participants are elementary experienced teachers who have a minimum of four years teaching experience (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014).

Positive collaboration. In this study, positive collaboration is awareness of self and seeking to collaborate with others, such as coworkers and communicating on a regular basis in a productive way (Cucchiara et al., 2013).

Relational Cultural Theory (RCT). For this study, RCT is the building of connections and developing of relationships (McCauley, 2013).

Relationship development. In this study, relationship development refers to developing existing and new relationships among colleagues and leadership. This type of development builds trust among peers (Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2015; McCarley, Peters, & Decman, 2014; You & Conley, 2015).

Retention. Retention refers to teachers staying in the teaching field (Cucchiara et al., 2013).

Teacher leavers. In this study, teacher leavers are teachers who have left teaching prior to retirement (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017).

Teachers' lived experiences. For the purpose of this study, teachers' experiences refer to experienced teachers sharing their own lived experiences to fully explore teacher retention and understand their experiences in urban school environments (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013).

Turnaround school. Turnaround school is a school reform strategy used to transform low-performing schools (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014).

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

An assumption in this study consisted of all seven participants' responses to the questionnaire and interviews were authentic to accurately reflect the participants' lived experiences in urban turnaround schools. The researcher informed participants by stating the

purpose of the interviews, and sent the final interview transcript for their review of accuracy, reliability, and credibility of their responses. Delimitations are specific boundaries that are set within a research study (Creswell, 2008). A possible delimitation to the study was the type of sampling methods used to recruit participants. The following methods were used to recruit participants purposeful sampling, criterion sampling, and snowball sampling. Purposeful sampling was selective as participants were purposefully selected based on their years of their teaching experience, which consisted of at least four years. Criterion sampling was used to ensure participants met the required criteria of the study regarding their years of experience and school environment. Snowball sampling allowed for recruited participants to recommend others for this researcher's study (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Groenewald, 2004; Seidman, 2013).

Another delimitation to the study was the level of experience that teachers must have to participate in the study, which consisted of teachers having at least four years of teaching experience and have taught in an urban turnaround school. The sample was teachers who taught only at elementary urban turnaround schools. This study sought to add to existing literature focused on teachers, and sought to aid in further exploration of teacher retention through the results of this researcher's study. The focus was on urban schools, but more specifically urban turnaround schools, as the reviewed literature revealed the need to further explore urban turnaround schools. Specific boundaries were set to a city in the Midwest. This boundary made it possible to focus on a smaller sample size and contribute significantly to the literature. The recruitment and data collection were another delimitation as it had taken place during the second semester of the school year, which included the end of the third quarter and throughout the fourth quarter (last quarter before summer), which may have limited the ability to recruit more participants and may have potentially altered results of teacher participants' lived experiences.

Limitations are distinct characteristics in the research design of the study or the methodology that may affect the research findings (Creswell, 2008). A limitation of the study was recruiting teachers with at least four years of teaching experience. Teachers with a minimum of four years were considered experienced teachers. Research was limited on exploring teachers' lived experiences who remain in their respective workplaces (Bennett et al., 2013; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). An additional limitation to the study was the limited number of experienced teachers within the geographical location, as a result of one public school district in a city in the Midwest. Another limitation of the study was the number of turnaround schools recruited; however, this limited number of turnaround schools allowed for an in-depth investigation due to the small sample size. The study focused on exploring experienced teachers' lived experiences as opposed to studying cause and effect relationships. In addition, a possible limitation to the study may be the urban area where the research was conducted as the results might not have been generalized due to the urban setting and the small sample size.

Summary

This phenomenological study explored factors of teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how these factors may have influenced experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the workplace. The conceptual framework for the study was the relational cultural theory, focused specifically on reframed essential elements based on specific educational themes which were commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate (McCauley, 2013). The purpose of the study was to help uncover and resolve the issue of teacher turnover and improve and sustain teacher retention. Also, this study focused on the positives pertaining to teacher retention, which were explored through teachers sharing their

perceptions regarding their lived experiences and if and how the essential elements of the RCT may contribute to teacher retention. The results of this study may be used to inform principals, teachers, and other education leaders of experienced teachers' lived experiences and how the elements of the RCT may be implemented to grow, develop, and foster to sustain positive relationships in the educational workplace, which may contribute to teacher retention.

This chapter included an introduction to the problem of teacher turnover and teacher retention, the framework for the study, the importance of the study, definitions of terms, which will be used throughout this study, and possible delimitations and limitations to this study. Chapter 2 reveals factors contributing to teacher attrition and teacher retention and discusses and critiques data methods. Chapter 2 also indicates the gap in the existing literature pertaining to experienced teachers in turnaround schools and sharing their positive and unique experiences regarding their workplaces. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed description of the methods that will be used in this study and the protocols for conducting this study. Chapter 4 will include a discussion of the data analysis and results. Chapter 5 will provide an in-depth discussion of the results, discussion for further studies, and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

Teacher attrition is a prominent issue in urban schools, particularly in turnaround schools (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Malen & Rice, 2004). Teachers are known as novice teachers between their first year and their third year, and then deemed experienced or an irreplaceable teacher upon completion of their fourth year (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). The majority of turnaround school teachers leave before they become experienced or irreplaceable teachers, and retaining these teachers is vital to ensuring urban schools' success (Cucchiara et al., 2013). Factors that lead to urban schools' success consist of a positive school culture and climate, administration support, construction of relationships in schools, collaboration, working towards a shared goal, and learning growth and development (Brezicha et al., 2015; Eldor & Shoshani, 2017; Hughes et al., 2015; Jacob et al., 2012; Saiti, 2015; Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015).

The literature review revealed prior studies pertaining to the demands placed upon irreplaceables in urban turnaround schools, detailed information describing urban turnaround schools, why teacher attrition occurs and the impact it has on the school culture and climate, teacher preparation, resilience, teacher experience, the roles of teachers and principals, and factors that support a positive school transformation and collaborative environment. The existing literature uncovered the need and importance of having a supportive teaching environment, particularly in urban schools that require school transformation (Cucchiara et al., 2013). Teachers' experiences will be scrutinized to determine the causes and outcomes of teacher attrition (Whipp & Geronime, 2017; You & Conley, 2015).

Several intrinsic and extrinsic factors contribute to the “revolving door” of teacher retention, such as lack of leadership support, maintaining enthusiasm and commitment, and extra working hours (Gu, 2014; Knell & Castro, 2014; Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017; You & Conley, 2015). The literature review revealed ways to try to improve teacher retention across all experience levels and aid in combating negative teachers’ perceptions both personally and professionally (Bennett et al., 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Gu, 2014; Knell & Castro, 2014; You & Conley, 2015).

The studies uncovered teachers’ perceptions, principals’ perceptions, teacher experiences and teacher attrition statistical urban school data. Throughout the literature review, the reader will encounter issues that have prompted challenges for teachers and administrators. In order for a positive school transformation to take place, support from principals must be provided to both novice and experienced teachers in order to retain them to ensure a positive culture and climate. Principal support, teacher autonomy, and professional learning opportunities have also been known to increase schoolwide student attainment and achievement (Bennett et al., 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Martin et al., 2015; Tricarico et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Also, the literature disclosed changes that have taken place due to education reform, such as impacted school culture and climate, lack of schoolwide cohesion, and development of school leader (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2016; Saiti, 2015). These issues presented in the literature led this researcher to identify a possible gap, and the focal point of analyzing and critiquing the literature.

Additionally, the literature disclosed how relationships in the teaching environment influence teacher retention and the essential elements of the relational cultural theory (RCT) (Doney, 2013; McCauley, 2013). These essential elements may assist in mending broken

relationships, transforming limited relationships, and enhancing relationships among teachers (McCauley, 2013). When RCT is implemented, the literature revealed how human relationships are improved through fostered growth and empowerment. Participants in this researcher's study may not only have found their own voice but may have developed the necessary skills to collaborate with others when RCT is related to factors in the respective environment (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). The literature exhibited the benefits of how RCT has been helpful in growing and developing relationships in the fields of social work and psychology (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). Neumerski (2013) suggested, "To address these shortcomings, we may need to do more than put the principal, teacher, and coaching literatures in conversation with one another" (p. 334). Neumerski recognized the need of having more than just a conversation and this reviewed literature is focused on multiple factors that contribute to teacher turnover. The literature presented a compelling theory that has been used in this researcher's study and may be found to improve teacher retention.

Conceptual Framework

Miller's (1976) relational cultural theory (RCT) can be influential to the turnaround school administration and help to provide supports that teachers receive in an urban school environment. RCT represented how to support, grow, and foster relationship development. A major factor affecting teacher retention is contingent upon the amount of support received and the literature uncovered the need for strong supports, such as administrative support to decrease teacher turnover. This study sought understand teachers' lived experiences based upon the support received from leadership and how leadership support influences retention in urban turnaround schools. The outcome of the relational cultural findings in the literature review may

help to transform the study as the theory will be acknowledged and implemented in a new setting, in this case, an educational setting.

RCT is distinct as it first began as a women's empowerment approach, which has shaped and transformed the female culture (East & Roll, 2015). RCT created a structured change in the social work setting for the female culture and created an environment of collaboration and participation (Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). The theory has changed from focusing explicitly on women to developing relationships between both men and women. Although this change has occurred, its foundation and core beliefs remain (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015).

The relational cultural theory is the building of connections to grow, foster, and develop relationships (McCauley, 2013). RCT examines connections and disconnections in relationships through essential elements used to grow and foster relationships. Embedded within RCT according to McCauley (2013) are five essential elements, which consist of the following:

Sense of zest or energy; increased sense of worth; clarity, which is knowledge of self and others in a relationship; productivity, which is taking action inside and outside of the relationship; and desire for more connection, which is seeking additional relational experiences. (p. 2)

The research demonstrated that these components are important to growing and developing healthy relationships and are steps in the pathway to mutual development among human beings. Miller's (1976) RCT was prominent in the literature reviewed as it pertains to relationships. Relationships are an essential factor of teacher support and improving teacher retention (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Brezicha et al., 2015; Doney, 2013; Gu, 2014). Based on the literature, understanding power, mutuality, and empathy are all components of the relational cultural

theory. Implementation of RCT components in both the social work environment and psychology environment has shown that support of one another within the environment provides for a healthier atmosphere (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). RCT focuses on personal relationships and societal relationships and how these relationships support human development (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016).

The literature review includes an investigation of the ways RCT may aid in being beneficial to the educational environment. RCT emphasizes how to build relationships; however, prior implementations of the relational cultural theory have been limited, as they have focused on social work and psychology environment. The literature uncovered how the implementation of RCT into these two environments has improved relationships (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). Further studies are needed to understand how to develop meaningful relationships among teachers, which may be beneficial to overcoming and sustaining intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors (Doney, 2013).

This researcher's study offers an exploration of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors regarding teacher retention. The literature revealed detailed teachers' perspectives of challenges and accomplishments but did not provide a plan to improve and intervene when challenges occur (Bennett et al., 2013, 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). RCT prompts growth among other factors that focus on the five essential elements of the theory. Developing relationships is a necessity to mutuality, which is created by shared collaboration and shared relational development. Shared collaboration and relational development make it possible for participants to sustain mutuality and foster further growth and development, which will lead to a healthy coexistence and mutual empowerment relationship (McCauley, 2013). Since RCT addresses the importance of relationships, it was used in this researcher's study as the framework

to explore teachers' lived experiences and may improve teacher retention as it may relate and contribute to specific factors of teacher retention.

The following research questions guided the study:

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

R₂: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Within the literature reviewed, turnaround schoolteachers' working conditions varied daily. The working conditions impact the culture, climate, and schoolteachers' ability to sustain the environment (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Klar & Brewer, 2013). Jacob et al. (2012) used a quantitative methodology to study four large urban areas in diverse geographical locations with 90,000 teachers participating. The study uncovered the need to retain "irreplaceables" as less than 20% of the teachers within the study were irreplaceables. An irreplaceable is known as a prosperous teacher because they have high levels of teacher performance and student achievement. The research revealed that prosperous teachers help students achieve and sustain academic growth at a faster rate than novice teachers and they provide differentiated learning opportunities, which provide more classroom engagement. The following themes emerged from the data, "retain irreplaceables and reinforce teaching by implementing higher expectations schoolwide" (Jacob et al., 2012). Within the study, the irreplaceables made a profound and positive impact on urban schools (Jacob et al., 2012). The impact was known as smart retention

and suggested that the ultimate goal was to retain the irreplaceables and either provide additional professional supports for low-performing teachers or replace low-performing teachers. The study resulted in the need for schools to implement smart retention. However, urban schools within the United States are currently facing a crisis regarding teacher retention especially in urban districts in the United States (Bennett et al., 2013).

Specific factors contribute to teachers deciding to remain in the teaching field or leave the teaching field. These factors consist of demanding workplace conditions, extensive work hours, lack of teacher support, school and principal support, maintaining commitment, autonomy, collaboration, culture, and climate (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2016; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Gu, 2014; Jacob et al., 2012; Jones, 2016). Overall, these factors may have a direct influence on whether teachers decide to remain or leave their current workplaces, especially when what has become expected of them has increased.

Classroom expectations such as class sizes, managing student behaviors, and administrative monitoring have increased while school funds from the state and school supports have remained unchanged, resulting in teachers leaving their current workplace for a different workplace or leaving the teaching field altogether (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Gu, 2014). It is crucial that irreplaceables are retained, and that teachers continue to stay in their respective schools because retention helps to support schoolwide student attainment and achievement (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Jacob et al., 2012). An irreplaceable must receive support from administration and other school leaders. When an irreplaceable leaves his or her respective school, it is difficult to replace him or her with a teacher who shares similar student engagement qualities and positive instructional characteristics; thus, it may take more time and money to hire a teacher when ultimately the irreplaceable was doing a sufficient job (Jacob et al.,

2012). Teacher turnover costs a great deal of time and money that the system may have devoted to other instructional needs (Ronfeldt, 2015). As a result, the turnaround school process becomes less effective due to continuous changes in staff and financials (Jacob et al., 2012; Reyes & Garcia, 2014). The continuous changes in staff and financials may have a direct impact on the school culture and climate as there is a lack of consistency among teachers, staff, and the students.

Saiti (2015) stated that there are many issues that have an effect on the workplace. One of these issues is a lack of cohesion among teaching staff and ineffective school leadership. This growing concern is evident in the rapid rate of teacher attrition in urban and high-poverty schools. In the study, 414 elementary school teachers in a metropolitan area completed surveys. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the percentages for the data focused on the categories of, “very often, often, rarely, and never.” The survey gathered personal and professional attributes and calculated conflicts that participants have among self, other educators, and the school leader. Of the participants, 68.8% selected “often” when surveyed about conflicts among self and members within the workplace. Factors that contributed to the majority of teacher attrition consisted of a lack of communication among school staff, lack of leadership, differences in teacher approaches, and lack of schoolwide direction. Overall, the study results concluded that conflict arises due to interpersonal and organizational issues and these issues are more prominent in urban schools. The majority of these issues have a negative impact on the school climate.

Further studies, conducted by Ford and Ware (2016), Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016), and Eldor and Shoshani (2017), assessed school climate and presented initial factors that contributed to the school climate. These factors consisted of workplace engagement, school and leadership

support, professional learning opportunities, shared pedagogy, autonomy, cooperative and positive colleague relationships. Ford and Ware (2016) built on Adams, Ware, Miskell, and Forsyth (2016), prior research, which was guided by the self-determination theory (SDT). Ford and Ware (2016) used this theory to assemble a conceptual model known as teacher self-regulatory climate (TSRC) that focused on competence, faculty trust in principal, faculty trust in colleagues, and autonomy. Ford and Ware (2016) surveyed teachers from a large urban district comprised of 72 elementary and secondary schools; 2,035 teachers completed the survey. The results were assessed on a 6-point Likert scale and the TSRC data revealed the following changes “59% professional development, 86% school structure, 66% principal trust, and 23% faculty and colleague trust” (p. 14). The results of the study uncovered that positive changes to the school climate will lend to supporting teachers and learning as a long-term investment and not just a short-term investment. A long-term investment of the school and its members will increase teacher satisfaction and retention.

Similarly, Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016) recruited teachers from an urban area. In the study, 268 teachers shared their perceptions to answer the following research questions: (1) how do teachers perceive their school climate; and (2) is there a connection between teachers’ perceptions of their school climate and effective teaching? Data were gathered from surveys and; 72.1% of data resulted in identifying three commonalities within the study of the supportive school climate, which are inclusive leadership, inspiring climate, and cooperative climate. Based on these results, Oder and Eisenschmidt suggested further improvement by “development of school leaders’ competences and teachers’ readiness to participate in school development; and value collegial support” (p. 14).

Eldor and Shoshani (2017) focused on teachers' work attitudes and surveyed 423 teachers in a large area consisting of 30 schools. Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory was used in the study and focused on climate-for-service, which refers to teachers' implementation, norms, and performance that is acknowledged and celebrated by school leadership. Hobfoll's resource theory seeks to "protect, retain, and accumulate resource for employees" (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017, p. 362). The climate-for-service 7-point scale gathered data from four variables that consisted of internal service, teacher work engagement, teacher job satisfaction, and teacher intention to leave work. Each variable, averaged based on Cronbach's scale of 0.78, measured teachers' interpretations. The internal service scale ranged "1 (poor) to 7 (excellent)" and resulted in a mean score of 5.1 (SD= 1.18); teacher work engagement from "1 (never) to 7 (always)" and resulted in a mean score of 5.9 (SD=0.80); teacher job satisfaction ranged "1 (do not agree at all) to 7 (strongly agree)" and resulted in a mean score of 6.2 (SD=0.87); and teacher intention to leave work ranged "1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)" and resulted in mean score of 2.21 (SD= 1.42). Relationships had a direct influence on climate-for-service and teachers' work attitudes. The study results showed that there is a direct influence that the school climate has on teachers' decisions to either remain or leave the workplace, thus impacting teacher retention. All three of these studies focused on a larger teacher population and analyzed school climate relationships through data analysis and correlation. The conclusion of these studies alluded to the experiences that teachers have within the work environment. These experiences had an influence on teacher attrition and teacher retention. These studies explicitly focused on factors within the work environment and brought additional data to the research.

Turnaround schools. According to Reyes and Garcia (2014) and Strunk et al. (2016), school leaders have adjusted their approaches to improving low-performing schools and depend

on school reform or school reconstitution as a turnaround school strategy for a solution to improve low-performing schools. A turnaround school administration seeks staff who they deem are committed and capable, and the majority of the prior staff is let go due to the school turnaround model. The turnaround school reform is strictly focused on the lowest-performing schools and implements teaching strategies and administrative structures (Strunk et al., 2016). According to Malen and Rice (2004), as cited in Strunk et al. (2016), these events followed the re-staffing, more qualified staff, increased motivations, engagement in school re-design, implementation of schoolwide staff collaboration, professional development opportunities, and implantation of the re-design to build a collaborative and organized school culture and climate resulting in the success of a turnaround school.

Reyes and Garcia (2014) reported that high-quality teachers must be retained to ensure success in turnaround schools. Reyes and Garcia (2014) conducted a case study focused on leadership practices in an elementary turnaround school, teacher practices, and archival data. Their study sought to understand how policies, practices, and demographics affect high-poverty students in low-performing schools. The school demographics were comprised of Hispanic and English language learners (ELL). In this study, a new principal started in 1999 and the school's state test scores had increased by 2004 due to the leadership. On his first day, the principal spoke with his teachers and began to develop collaborative relationships. He interviewed them in order to understand their background and what they brought to the school community. While he was doing this, Reyes and Garcia observed and interviewed the principal multiple times throughout the 4-year period. Triangulation was used to organize the data collected from interviews, observations, and archival data over four years. Through multiple principal interviews, school culture plays a vital role in staff connections and retention; student

achievement relies on a culture of high expectations and parent involvement is important to sustaining school success emerged as themes from the study. Overall, this study reflected how important it is for a school to have a leader who is not only strong but also collaborative.

Through the principal's leadership and the rapport he built with his teachers, he was able to increase the overall culture and climate within the school. This directly related to the current study as it pertained to relationship building and strong collaboration.

In addition, Strunk et al. (2016) conducted a mixed-methods study focused on school reconstitution and how school reconstitution impacts teacher mobility and student achievement. The study investigated the effects that the turnaround model had on teachers and principal leaders at two school sites. The following questions guided the research: (1) how does school reconstitution affect teacher mobility and teacher workforce of low-performing schools; (2) how does school reconstitution affect student outcomes in low-performing schools; and (3) what conditions and factors contributed to the observed outcomes of reconstitution in our case study schools? The variables analyzed teacher and student results, and participants within their first three years were recruited across two urban schools. The study also drew on existing statistical data focused on teacher mobility over a 14-year period and value-added measures (VAM) scores were calculated and incorporated into the study analysis. Strunk et al. conducted principal interviews, teacher interviews, and parents participated in focus groups. In the study, the following themes emerged from the data: more teachers leave turnaround schools within their first few years; student achievement was greater in ELA compared to math after the reconstitution; leadership, school culture, climate, and environmental conditions had an effect on the reconstitution outcomes. Overall, Strunk et al. (2016) stated that reconstitution has the potential to build a positive organizational environment and improve student achievement;

however, the positive impact happens in the first three years of the turnaround model. Strunk et al. suggested that future research is needed to understand teachers working in turnaround schools and recognized the need to seek and invest in retaining high-quality teachers to ensure organizational development and teacher retention, which pertains directly to the current study.

Attrition. Cucchiara et al. (2013) conducted a mixed-methods study focused on negative workplace factors that contribute to teacher attrition. The purpose of the study explored teachers' perceptions focused on social and organizational factors in the workplace. The majority of the study uncovered challenging factors attributed to attrition within the workplace and a limited number of positive factors. Participants included 86 teachers from 12 turnaround schools in one urban district. The perceptions of the 86 teachers were examined through a qualitative design, asking the following questions: (1) what aspects of teachers' working conditions matter most to teachers in the early stages of school turnaround; (2) how do school-level working conditions affect teacher support for the turnaround process?

This study was part of a larger study and the data were collected through observations, interviews, and focus groups. As part of a larger study, ATLAS.ti was used to code the data (Cucchiara et al., 2013). The results of the study were categorized into three groups that included, "challenging group, positive group, and mixed group" (Cucchiara et al., 2013, p. 265). The following issues emerged from the data: lack of support, consistency, shared instructional expectations, and additional support structures. Overall, all teachers among 12 schools described their working conditions as extremely demanding, rigorous, and with intensive working hours. Teachers within the "challenging group" felt frustrated and defeated due to their working conditions and this also influenced how the teachers felt about the turnaround school model. This study reflected the negative impact of working conditions and lack of support on teachers,

potentially resulting in teacher attrition. Cucchiara et al. (2013) noted a surprising finding of instability schoolwide among challenging schools and how these challenging schools encountered unexpected schedule changes and conflicting messages as the respective teachers' working conditions changed frequently due to demands of schedules and administration. The researchers recognized the need to further conduct research on turnaround and teachers. Cucchiara et al. (2013) stated, "Turnaround schools and urban reform more generally cannot succeed without addressing teachers' concerns and creating conditions that make teachers feel supported, respected, and capable in their work" (p. 282). Without the basic understanding of teachers' concerns, the chance of teacher attrition within urban turnaround schools increases.

Urban schools continue to face significant challenges and teaching conditions push and pull teacher attrition. Push factors influenced one to leave suddenly and pull factors influenced one to strive towards improvement (Knell & Castro, 2014). Knell and Castro (2014) investigated 13 teachers and their motivations to teach in urban schools. The 13 teachers were part of an alternative certification program and participated in focus groups and follow-up interviews. A push-pull analysis was used to understand both personal and contextual aspects of understanding teachers' motivations. The following themes of push-pull analysis emerged from the study and the teachers' motivations for leaving: motivation for teaching depended on push factors of work stability and personal fulfillment; push factors influenced participants' decisions to leave the workplace due to dissatisfaction; desire for work stability; and extensive working hours. Pull factors retained individuals in the profession and the following themes for pull factors uncovered teachers' motivations to make a difference and a supportive work environment. The most surprising finding of the study revealed that teachers were attracted to teaching due to either altruistic motivations or egocentric motivations. Altruistic motivations consisted of teachers'

desires to contribute to society by helping students learn. Egocentric motivations consisted of teachers entering into the field to improve their own personal goals and lifestyle. The study recognized the need for further investigation focused on motivations for teaching and teachers' contributions regarding their future successes in urban schools.

Thibodeaux et al. (2015) examined teachers' working conditions in a school environment through a lens of effective leadership and high-stakes testing. A mixed-methods design was used for this study. The questions for the study consisted of the following: (1) is there a relationship between principal leadership styles and behaviors and teachers' intent to remain in the teaching profession and principal leadership; (2) is there a difference in the levels of teacher job satisfaction between teachers of state-measured subject areas and teachers of non-state measured subject areas; and (3) is there a relationship between teacher job satisfaction, teacher morale, teacher satisfaction, and teachers' intent to remain or leave the teaching profession? Survey results were gathered from 212 teachers in K-12 public schools within five school districts to answer the study's questions. The survey questions consisted of demographics, leadership behaviors, intention, job satisfaction, mentoring, and intrinsic motivations. A 5-point Likert scale was used to collect the data and ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The data results showed that principal leadership had a direct impact on whether teachers remain or leave the workplace and the least changing factor was mentoring. After final analysis, the researchers noted that teachers' perceptions stated that leadership is placing more pressures upon teachers who are responsible for teaching standardized test subjects rather than non-tested subjects. Thus, teachers feel these pressures and are leaving the workplace in high numbers. Overall, negative workplace factors contribute to teacher attrition and have negatively impacted retention.

Teacher attrition has become a major concern and, as a result, many organizational and contextual problems have occurred (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017). These problems consisted of dissatisfaction in the workplace, decline in student achievement, and rigorous expectations (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017). Rinke and Mawhinney (2017) examined these problems and how intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors push and pull teachers. The social constructivism and life-design theoretical framework was used to grasp intrinsic and extrinsic factors focused on life experiences and development of teacher leavers' careers. Teacher leavers are teachers who have left teaching prior to retirement (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017). The researchers focused on an intentional subject area of recruitment known as teacher leavers.

In the study, 24 participants meeting the criteria of leaving the teaching environment before retirement were recruited from the East, South, Midwest, and West regions in the United States and ranged from having teaching experience of 2 to 23 years. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and coded by multiple components, such as educational background, years taught, and frustrations. After the data were analyzed and coded, one unique theme emerged: many of the teacher leavers did not deliberately plan on becoming a teacher as they didn't enter college enrolled to pursue an education degree. Other themes that stood out were desires to make a difference, and aspirations to further work with young people outside of teaching experiences. Although the teacher leavers entered into the teaching field with these common aspirations, they soon were deflated by intrinsic and extrinsic factors as the working conditions kept pushing them away from the teaching environment and pulling them into other career environments. The common conditions of attrition, which stood out in the conclusion of the study's findings, included, excessive working hours, overwork and exhausted lack of leadership, salary, and connectedness outside of the workplace. The researchers recognized the need to see

attrition as a complex component that consists of multiple factors and not just focus on demands inside the classroom. Ultimately, the research unearthed the need for necessary supports and collaborative environment to sustain retention within the classroom and schoolwide to positively enhance the teachers' experience and environment.

The emphasis that teachers place on their work can cause them to feel as if they are overwhelmed and overworked, which may lead to teacher attrition (Jones, 2016). Jones (2016) conducted a quantitative study focused on perfectionism, which is another working condition that contributes to teacher attrition. Questions focused on perfectionism were three dimensions, standards, order, and discrepancy. The study's hypothesis consisted of the following: (1) the standards dimension of perfectionism will not predict commitment to teaching; (2) teachers with a longer-term commitment to teaching will score lower in their commitment to teaching; and (3) teachers with a long-term commitment to urban schools will score lower than teachers with a long-term commitment to suburban schools on the standards dimensions of perfectionism (Jones, 2016). The sample was 118 suburban and urban teacher who were graduates from masters' programs and competitive teaching programs. Participants were asked about their plans of teaching commitment and selected from the following options, 0 more years, 1-2 more years, or 3-5 more years. The study calculated the participants' responses by adding total number of years taught to their total number of projected years to teach. The study additionally focused on the school environment and how it was perceived by the respective participants. The researchers' hypothesis #1 was supported as standards did not predict commitment. Hypothesis 2 was not supported by the findings. Hypothesis 3 was evaluated by reducing the sample size into urban and suburban categories. The reduced sample size revealed partial results. However, the results of the study recognized the need to inform teacher candidates to consider self and their qualities

as they select a teaching job. The findings created a space for teachers to take steps to making retention possible in the “impossible” career (Jones, 2016, p. 445). It is apparent the need to collaborate to inform teacher candidates and provide a space to support teachers.

Research findings have shown that being a teacher can be extremely demanding. Teaching within intense, rigorous, and challenging environments where teachers may be rated based upon their students’ test results have created a challenging work environment (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Thibodeaux et al., 2015). There are many different factors that contribute to teacher attrition as mentioned previously, and it is vital that attrition is viewed through a complex lens. With all of these challenges, teachers may be faced with deciding on whether or not the challenges are worth teaching in their respective environment. Turnover within a school causes further issues to the culture and climate of the school, especially for the students (Ronfeldt, 2015). Students are impacted in their achievement when teacher attrition happens.

Teacher preparation. Ronfeldt (2015) conducted a quantitative study focused on field placement schools where potential teaching candidates had completed their student teaching. The study investigated the effect that relationships have on teachers’ preservice performance and their field placement performance. The following research questions were presented: (1) What kinds of schools are used as field placement sites to prepare student teachers during preservice education; (2) are teachers most effective at raising reading and math achievement by teaching in different kinds of field placement schools; and (3) are teachers most effective at raising reading and math achievement due to teaching in field placement schools? The variables analyzed teacher and school characteristics and surveyed a large sample size of 725 teachers across 308 schools. The study also drew on existing statistical data over a 3-year period and value-added measures (VAM) scores were calculated and incorporated into the study analysis. In the study,

topics of leadership, school climate/collaboration, education, and student teaching were variables in the data. Ronfeldt (2015) reported that teacher retention and student achievement is possible if teachers' field placements match their preservice student-teaching sites regarding student and school demographics.

Whipp and Geronime's (2017) mixed-methods study investigated patterns of preservice teachers focused on before, during, and after teacher-preparation as a first-year teacher. The participants included 72 teachers who had recently graduated from urban school teacher-education programs and had committed to working in high-poverty schools for at least three years. The study sought to answer the following questions: (1) Does commitment to work in high-poverty urban schools predict retention for 3 or more years; (2) does commitment to work in urban schools predict first job location; and (3) does commitment to work in high-poverty urban schools predict retention for 3 or more years? The questions were created intentionally to drive the data to meet each variable of before, during, and after teacher-preparation experiences. Data were gathered from surveys, interviews, and were part of a longitudinal study based on teachers' experiences before, during, and after teacher preparation. Whipp and Geronime (2017) uncovered a positive correlation between similar teacher preparation and a teacher's first year teaching environment, and the benefit of remaining in a comparable school environment. The researchers' findings revealed the importance of student-teachers to be immersed in different types of teaching environments in their teacher-preparation programs. This opportunity will provide student-teachers with exposure to different environments, which will diversify their learning experience.

In addition to a teacher's first-year experience, a study conducted by Nichols et al. (2017) identified and understood teacher connections as they make the transition as a first-year teacher.

The study explored teachers' emotions, and how they are related to emerging teachers. Eight participants teaching among eight urban high schools were recruited for the study. The participants were from selective teacher-preparation programs and had taught in the same type of environment as their student-teaching experience. This study was part of a larger research study that was seeking a more complex understanding of teachers' emotions, and how they develop and change as teaching years progress. The following four themes developed from the data: (1) incoming teacher beliefs; (2) teacher emotional episodes; (3) teacher attributions; and (4) teacher adjustments. The findings of the study made it possible for participants to understand their teacher work obligations, and the role their emotions play, especially in the first year of teaching. The study contributed to existing research on understanding teacher transition from preparation programs into their first year; however, a disconnect between expectations and experiences remains. Nichols et al. (2017) suggested that first-year teachers may benefit from training pertaining to different experiences that may be encountered within the internal and external environment of a school, which may not be encountered until such respective teacher is teaching on his or her own. The researchers recognized the need for school recruiters and administrators to focus on prior teaching related experiences regarding teacher preparation, in order to ensure a successful teaching environment.

Tricarico et al.'s (2015) mixed-methods study uncovered teacher preparation, and experience within the field to fulfill the teacher's five-year commitment. The following questions guided their research study: (1) how do participants describe the characteristics that influence their five-year retention; (2) how do participants describe their success as teachers; and (3) how do participants describe the professional support they received in their preparation program, and during the four years after completing the program. Seven participants were

recruited from urban schools and had completed the apprenticeship preparation program and completed at least five consecutive years of teaching. The variables analyzed the social constructivist view of power and the impact that power has on teacher and school characteristics. These characteristics consisted of each teacher's student learning outcomes, and existing teachers' performance gathered from statistical data. In the study, topics of persistence, motivation/work ethic, calling, differentiated instruction, family, and community were variables in the data. The study's findings consisted of shared belief in student success; strong work ethic; passion to teach; resilience; and supportive leadership. These findings supported teachers' reasons for staying and the impact that power has in the school environment. A unique finding in this study revealed that each participant's workplace did not have a collaborative environment.

Resilience. Due to all the demanding working conditions and challenges in the educational environment, it is vital to understand the how and why teachers are able to remain resilient in order to ensure retention (Gu, 2014). A resilient teacher is able to adapt more quickly to his or her surroundings in difficult times and has a positive attitude when faced with pressures and uncertainties, which teachers face on a daily basis (Doney, 2013). Doney (2013) and Gu (2014) examined teachers' abilities to remain resilient over an extended period of time. Doney's (2013) case study investigated the process of stressors, and challenging factors in the participants' teaching environments; an analysis was conducted to identify factors that contributed to resilience. The following research questions guided the study: (1) How is resilience developed in novice secondary science teachers; and (2) does resilience affect novice teacher retention? The study had four participants with six interviews were conducted over a 2-year period and the data emphasized that resilience was not a personality trait, but the context of the participants' lives leads to teacher resilience. The researcher stated that resilience is a result

of novice teachers' ability to cope and balance interactions among personal and professional contexts.

Gu (2014) used a mixed-methods approach to investigate patterns of teachers' experiences, and lives over a 3-year period. The study analysis was comprised of 300 teachers' different levels of experience within 100 primary and secondary schools. In the study, topics of high-quality teachers, teacher resilience, relational resilience, and effectiveness were variables in the analysis. Several themes emerged from the data: trust and trustworthiness; teacher and leader relationships; teacher and teacher relationships; and teacher and student relationships shape a teacher's resilience. Gu (2014) found that resilience is complex and not innate; teachers and teacher resilience is only possible through a community that has a shared purpose. A shared purpose is working towards a shared goal.

Teacher experience. Teachers fall into two different categories, based upon their number of years of teaching. These two categories consist of novice teachers and experienced teachers. Experienced teachers have a minimum of four years in the education field (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). Bennett et al.'s (2013) phenomenological study explored influencing factors, specifically, novice teachers and experienced teachers' choices to stay in their respective teaching field. The research questions were open ended and the guiding question was, "What factors influence the longevity in the teaching field?" (Bennett et al., 2013, p. 565). Open-ended interview questions were probed when the researchers needed to gather more information as participants were asked to elaborate on specific factors. The small sample size consisted of two novice teachers who had taught in low-performing schools for less than three years and two experienced teachers who had taught in low-performing schools for at least 20 years. A common finding revealed that all participants had a passion to teach in their respective schools.

Experienced teachers' longevity in the field consisted of the following factors: passion for teaching, personal influences, family time, and spiritual reasons; however, the experienced teachers mentioned the demands of teachers have increased over time, and teachers have to fill more responsibilities now, especially since it is more difficult to capture students' attention due to technology. Novice teachers' longevity in the field consisted of student motivation, teacher stability, gratification, and positive impact of students.

Bennett et al. (2013) also analyzed relationships that consisted of three levels: principals, colleagues, and students. The analyses revealed that all three levels of interpersonal relationships were prominent to novice and experienced teachers' decisions to remain because they continue to grow in their learning and are satisfied in their current role. Principal support and colleague relationships are crucial to retaining teachers (Bennett et al., 2013). According to Greenlee and Brown (2009), as cited in Bennett et al. (2013), "it is essential for researchers to continue to examine teachers who remain in the field to fully understand the complexity of attrition and retention" (p. 574). The information of this study can be transferable to the current study, which will further explore perceptions of experienced teachers who remain in urban workplaces.

Kirkpatrick and Johnson's (2014) exploratory study focused explicitly on second-stage teachers (experienced teachers) with at least four years of experience and explored the different ways teachers engage in the educational workplace, and how their engagement has changed from a beginning teacher (novice teacher) to a second-stage (experienced) teacher. The study had six participants across six schools. Interviews, using open-ended questions, focused on teaching attitudes and behaviors were conducted. Participants were asked to describe their enthusiasm for teaching and were asked to compare their experienced years of teaching to their novice years.

Due to the teachers' level of experience, the following themes emerged from the data: teachers built on what they had previously been challenged with such as, daily challenges a teacher faces; teachers have the ability to build on their learnings and prior challenges; teachers had a greater level of confidence and competency. The researchers reported the need to acquire more information about second-stage teachers, and if their experiences varied from school to school. Also, the study focused on specific elements such as work engagement, development, and supportive professional developments. However, the study conducted is very limited as it does not address the relationship to commitments outside of the workplace or how their relationships within the educational workplace have either remained consistent or changed over time (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). The relationships to commitments outside of the workplace consisted of opportunities teachers seek, and find; however, these opportunities are not further addressed.

You and Conley's (2015) quantitative study examined teachers' perceptions in different career stages, which are novice teachers, mid-career teachers, and veterans. The study explored factors focused on teachers leaving the workplace, and if these factors remained consistent through the different career stages or if teachers needed different supports at different career stages. The ultimate goal of their study was to understand the effects of variable conditions in the workplace regarding teachers' decisions on remaining or leaving in comparison to their counterparts who are in a different stage of their career. Researchers used Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) provided to 17,125 teachers divided into three different career stage categories, novice, mid-career, and veteran teachers. Data received were coded using structural equation modeling (SEM), which assessed the structural relationships between variables. The data revealed similarities between the different career stages, which consisted of positive leadership

support, teacher autonomy, and teacher efficacy. The study reinforced the need for leadership support, collaborative relationships, and teacher autonomy (You & Conley, 2015). The researchers suggested that principal leadership consider ways to build collaboration, develop curriculum meetings, colleague assistance, and mentoring across levels of experience, and supportive opportunities to grow and develop professionally. The novice teachers who did not receive the same support were not committed to returning for an additional year (You & Conley, 2015).

Gordon and Lowrey (2016) recognized the need to support novice teachers in the workplace in order to ensure retention in the teaching environment. By studying the components of other research pertaining to cultivating novice teachers, Gordon and Lowrey (2016) created a mentoring web, encompassing all of these components. The mentoring web consisted of principals, induction programs, mentors, college/university support, support staff, students, and parents. A mentoring web was essential to identifying the needed components to support teachers and how this web can guarantee teacher success in their first 1-3 years (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016). The researchers found that those who received support during their first year through principal interactions and professional development felt more confident in their ability to instruct and manage student behavior in their second year had a higher probability of remaining in the current workplace. Novice teachers will frequently seek administrative and peer support, and it is vital that support is received when it is sought in the areas of classroom management, discipline, parent conferences, and student conflicts (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016).

Adoniou (2016) and Gaikhorst et al. (2017) explored various factors that contribute to beginning teachers' (novice teachers) experiences in urban schools. These contributing factors identified challenges that beginning teachers may be faced with in urban schools. Adoniou's

(2016) qualitative study consisted of a small sample size of 14 teachers among 14 different school sites. Data were collected over 16-months through observations, interviews, and field notes. Two themes of vision and frustration emerged from the study's findings. Vision referred to why the participants decided to become teachers and their personal aspirations of their ability to teach. Frustration referred to the school context and restrictions placed on teachers by the school leaders. Teachers are restricted by their respective schools due to various curriculums and teaching resources. The data displayed the need for school leaders to provide specific direction for their teachers through implementation of a long-term plan, support teachers, and a shared instructional, community purpose, and be invested in the school mission in executing social reform. Adoniou (2016) disclosed that beginning teachers can be retained if teachers are provided with guidance from school leaders.

The essential research question for Gaikhorst et al.'s (2017) exploratory study was, "What are the challenges that beginning teachers encounter in urban primary schools with different kinds of student populations?" (Gaikhorst et al., 2017, p. 49). The participants included 15 beginning teachers from 15 urban elementary schools with diverse student populations. Interviews were conducted in two parts in order to identify specific challenges that occurred among beginning teachers. During the first part of the interview, participants were asked questions regarding challenges they had encountered. During the second part of the interview, participants were asked to identify challenges among the eight challenges that the interviewee had presented to them. The eight challenges that the interviewee referred to consisted of the following: (1) cultural background; (2) background of parents; (3) second language learners; (4) diversity; (5) adaptive education; (6) children at risk; (7) violence and insecurity; and (8) children's home situation. The following themes developed from the first part of the interview:

long working hours; limited guidance and support, and limited parent support. From the second part of the interview, the following themes emerged: difficulty in dealing with student and staff diversity; difficulty in modifying instruction to meet all learner needs; and dealing with violence and poverty.

Gaikhurst et al. (2017) reported that teachers in low-income urban schools and other urban schools are faced with challenges; however, these challenges will vary based on student population. Also, Gaikhurst et al. (2017) found that teachers who are supported have significant effects on overcoming challenges faced daily. They found that those who received support during their first year, through principal interactions and professional development, felt more confident in their ability to instruct and manage behavior in their second year have a higher probability of remaining in the current workplace. All of these studies alluded to the importance of administrative support to all teachers, regardless of their levels of experience. Support from the school administrator emphasizes teachers' growth and development in learning. Thus, the role of the administrator cannot be overlooked while constructing organizational conditions, which must promote discussion and mutual reflection (Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2016).

Principal leadership and support. Research has shown it is possible for schools to retain staff and be deemed high performing in high-poverty and minority populations when the school and administration provide their staff with a great deal of support. This support consists of, but is not limited to, setting directions, developing teachers, redesigning the organization, and managing instructional programs (Klar & Brewer, 2013). Neumerski (2013) added to existing literature by studying leadership and learning and how they influenced the connection in the workplace and student achievement. Neumerski evaluated statistical data with a collaborative lens and focused on the influence an administrator has schoolwide. Neumerski concluded that

the positive benefits of principal collaboration improved teacher and student achievement and their study uncovered that collaboration is essential to schoolwide attainment and teacher retention. Klar and Brewer (2013) reviewed and discussed principal leadership practices that supported teachers and the school environment. Their recruitment process was very selective in the mixed-methods study. The recruited principals had experience in low-income schools and had at least three years of experience. Also, within the three years, the school must have shown an overall improvement in the school's academic performance. The pre-existing data were used to analyze the school reports; three principals from different urban schools participated in the study.

The researchers conducted 3-day site visits, semi-structured interviews, and a cross-case analysis, which was used to code the data based on the elements of the comprehensive school-wide reform (CSR) model. This model consisted of the following elements: (1) setting direction; (2) developing people; (3) redesigning the organization, and (4) managing instructional programs. Based on the four elements of the CSR, the researchers found that each principal had created a shared vision and communicated this vision to the workplace staff. The principals provided opportunities for professional learning to develop their staff; made necessary changes to support collaboration in the workplace, intentionally selected staff, and provided school-wide and individual supports to the entirety of the staff. The principals adapted their respective practices to the contextual factors of the school and focused on listening, guiding, and understanding the workplace staff. With the principals' attention, teachers have the opportunity to receive the necessary support they require.

Receiving support from school leaders enables teachers to feel valued, and teachers who feel valued and receive support will view the leader as one who values their contributions and

will acknowledge them as a team-oriented leader (McCarley et al., 2014). McCarley et al. (2014) discussed teachers' experiences and the relationship that leadership support has on the workplace. The participants consisted of 399 high school teachers among five urban high schools. Teachers completed surveys to assess their principals' leadership and climate of their current workplaces. The data were coded based on a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The MLQ measured five areas of principal transformation which consisted of (1) attributes; (2) behaviors; (3) motivations; (4) stimulation; and (5) individual consideration. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess these five areas. Participants' responses ranged from "not at all" to "frequently." After data collection and analysis of the MLQ, the researchers used Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ-RS) to measure the school climate. These measurements focused on (1) supportive behavior; (2) direct behavior; (3); engaged behavior; (4) frustrated behavior; and (5) friendly behavior. The OCDQ-RS measured leadership support and leadership instruction and teacher interactions were measured by engagement, frustration, and friendly. McCarley et al.'s (2014) study showed successful schools have supportive leadership who promote peer learning, a team-oriented environment when making decisions, and follow-through on implemented initiatives.

Supportive school leaders are a crucial factor in urban teachers' success (Tricarico et al., 2015). Hughes et al., (2015) examined the relationship between principal and teachers. The instrument used in their study was an Administrative Support Survey in order to ensure results focused on administrative supports. Hughes et al. used a non-experimental correlation surveying 17 administrators and 41 teachers who worked in low-income schools known as "hard-to-staff" schools in the study. The study's measurement scale was based on emotional support, environment support, instructional support, and technical support. The most significant

correlation among teachers' results was emotional support and environmental support; however, the findings reported that support was needed in all areas, which included emotional, environmental, instructional, and technical in order to ensure retention. Principals' perceptions in this study showed greater support for their respective teachers compared to the actual support that was given. Teacher and principal perceptions varied in the study as they had different views. These different views can have a profound impact on teacher attrition and retention. It is vital that principals understand how they support their teachers, and the impact their support can have on the workplace (Hughes et al., 2015). Therefore, leadership support is a major component pertaining to teacher retention. Teachers in a supportive environment are more positive, proud of their personal and professional accomplishments, engaged in school successes, and are less frustrated when challenges occur (Hughes et al., 2015; McCarley et al., 2014). Engagement from both the principal and teacher contributes to a positive and desirable workplace.

In addition, engagement and encouragement from the principal to the teacher provide for positive collaboration and build confidence in teacher autonomy. Teacher autonomy can be limited from school to school. With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2009, teachers have a structured source to follow. Some schools have scripted curriculums for each subject, while other schools implement the CCSS into their own lesson planning. Keddie (2016) and Dou et al. (2016) researched the importance of supporting teachers through the implementation of school autonomy. The researchers showed that having teacher autonomy in the workplace promotes teacher accountability and satisfaction. Keddie (2016) conducted interviews with school leaders and teachers among 2 suburban high schools. The questions asked were based on existing data of school autonomy and its outcomes on school

performance. Between these two schools, expectations for teacher autonomy were diversified, and expectations were fulfilled in various ways due to the difference in school leaders and their motivations (Keddie, 2016). Keddie (2016) study uncovered the influence that autonomy can have on the school and community environment.

Dou et al.'s (2016) quantitative study used a 5-point Likert scale to measure survey responses given to 48 principals and 472 teachers to evaluate teacher autonomy within the school and principal leadership. The findings indicated that principal leadership may or may not have a direct influence on teacher autonomy; however, at times strong leaders feel the demands of teacher autonomy as they can play a vital role in student achievement (Dou et al., 2016). Urban school leaders share different perspectives and expectations regarding autonomy. School autonomy has an indirect effect on teacher retention based on the school culture, climate, and teachers' perceptions. You and Conley (2015) found that teachers, who have no autonomy in decision making or teachers who have been removed from partaking in decisions, feel powerless in the workplace. An autonomous school environment supports teachers by providing better working conditions, and teacher empowerment opportunities. School leaders can have a positive or negative influence on teachers' perceptions of autonomy, thus impacting teacher retention (Ford & Ware, 2016). Further research is needed to explicitly understand autonomy since it is so complex and can be influenced based on the work environment.

Effective school principals provide feedback, and support teachers to ensure teacher success and academic success (Klar & Brewer, 2013). Support promotes instructional improvement and reduces teacher turnover. Thus, teacher turnover is decreased and teachers within the respective school show improvement in their teaching quality and student

achievement. Retained teachers help to create and sustain a consistent school culture and climate. Support within the workplace is crucial to teacher commitment (You & Conley, 2015).

School transformation. Urick and Bowers (2014) identified different types of leadership styles and used the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) from 1999-2000 to uncover themes of leading school transformation. The researchers used this specific SASS survey because it included leadership variables, which are not found in current SASS surveys. Their study relied on these specific leadership variables to meet the criteria to conduct the study. The final sample of the study contained 7,650 public schools and SASS principals. A 5-point Likert scale was used, and the survey contained responses of principal' perceptions and school contexts. Three types of principals emerged from the data, integrating, controlling, and uncooperative. Of the principals from the study 84.03% fell within the integrating category as they were transformational leaders. Thus, integrating principals provide support and instructional focus to the school climate. The researchers stated that an integrating principal developed a shared mission, which makes it possible for the school community to have a shared vision (Urlick & Bowers, 2014). Having a shared vision promotes cohesion in the school environment.

Brezicha et al. (2015) case study was conducted over a 3-year period and data were gathered from observations, field notes, and interviews. The study examined principal support and veteran teachers' experiences. There were four cases and each case included one principal and three teachers per case study. Grounded theory was used to guide and interpret the data. Brezicha et al. (2015) concluded that leaders need to understand different ways in which to engage teachers. The researchers suggested the need for school leaders to continue to collaborate and to understand their teaching staff and differentiate their supports based on what the teachers need. Urick and Bowers (2014) and Brezicha et al. (2015) discussed the important

role that principals have within a school. Principals' behaviors are linked to teacher retention in the education realm. Without guidance and support of a leader, relationships, collaboration, and trust do not have time to develop between teacher and principal. Teachers who are supported by their principals have the ability to adapt their teaching practice based on feedback communicated by school leaders. The researchers' studies focused on positive school transformation by uncovering how differentiated support promotes cohesion among teachers and the school community.

Having cohesion will make it possible for principals to focus on offering emotional support, developing teacher relationships, building trust, and creating a transformational school culture (Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015). Wieczorek and Theoharis (2015) evaluated principals' emotions shaped by school transformation, and their abilities to balance the intrinsic and extrinsic demanding factors. This study was part of a larger study on principals, and Race-to-the-Top (RTTT) policies. The following research questions were presented: (1) How do urban middle school and urban high school level principals recognize and interpret teachers' emotional responses during rapid, policy-driven changes at the school level; and (2) how do principals use these social, cognitive, and emotional responses in their practices to lead schools during times of rapid change? A sample of 12 principals participated in the study over a 2-year period and the principals were selected from urban, suburban, and rural schools. From the study, the following themes emerged: principals recognized need to support teachers; recognized the importance of professional development; acknowledged that school transformation is not possible until there is schoolwide cohesion; and the importance of motivation and support through challenging times. The researchers reported that the principal participants were able to identify and describe how

transformational changes have restructured principals' practices in order to support the school and staff.

Another way to foster school transformation is to encourage principals to redesign the school environment to promote positive culture and climate. Redesigning the school environment promotes a supportive, effective, and sustaining school community (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017). Principals who share in the development of a positive school environment build the capacity of the school and building capacity is a positive result of academic growth. The principal has an influence on teacher growth outcomes and it is vital for principals to share in supporting the development of teachers through frequent communication and sharing of student concerns (Urlick & Bowers, 2014). This type of leadership develops a supportive environment and partnership as a whole school community (Brezicha et al., 2015)

Collaboration, culture, and climate. Frequent collaboration schoolwide allows for relationships to become transparent. Research shows that trusting relationships are a result of positive communication and a positive community. Moate's (2014) narrative investigation focused on teacher community and explore teacher community experiences and if shared experiences developed the overall school community. The data were collected over a year-and-half period from five teacher participants. The researcher conducted six sessions, and each session encompassed a different pedagogical way of thinking. The study results acknowledged that the community process is comprised of multiple factors that build from each other. The different levels of their involvement correspond with teachers' levels of commitment. Moate concluded that positive experiences within the teacher community promote development and relationships among colleagues. Relationships are an important aspect of teacher resilience and

their commitment in the workplace. There is a need to develop supportive relationships to foster growth and development in terms of teacher support (Brezicha et al., 2015; Gu, 2014).

Teacher support promotes collaboration and commitment, which are components of RCT (Doney, 2013). RCT was the basis for the current study for building and sustaining connection in the workplace (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). Alvarez and Lazzari (2016) reflected on personal experiences and building relationships among two social work participants and the case study incorporated the Women's Council (WC) structure. WC is comprised of contextual factors and relational skills. In the case study, the researchers concentrated on how RCT was significant to building positive relationships in personal and professional lives. The WC guided the participants with the opportunity to implement relational behaviors and process to determine if it aided in positive relationship development. Alvarez and Lazzari reported that growth-fostering relationships allow for mutual learning, development, and collaborative exchange to happen. As a result of such relationships, personal and professional growth are possible (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). Relationships are vital to teacher retention, and when relationships are threatened by animosity, it depletes and threatens morale. When relationships are nurtured with support, they foster human growth and development.

Support is the result of relational components within the school organization between administration and teachers becoming unified. This unification requires an action to redesign the organization. When principals initiate this action to change, rejuvenation is gained, and, as a result, collaborative relationships are built. Redesigning the organization requires developing a collaborative culture, buy-in of environment support, and building realistic relationships with colleagues and school community families, parents, teachers, and administration who are invested and unified in the school environment (Klar & Brewer, 2013).

To further support teachers and principals in the redesigning of the organization, implementation of mentoring, co-teaching, coaching, professional development, and outside programs are necessary. Implementation of these will help to develop people by recognizing their strengths and weaknesses and this development will be beneficial to school and teacher improvement (Klar & Brewer, 2013). Martin et al. (2015) and Carr, Holmes, and Flynn (2017) explored essential supports to promote teacher support which may lead to teacher retention. Both novice and experienced teachers are in need of school supports. Martin et al. (2015) recruited five participants for a case study that explored mentoring through their shared experiences. When needed, the mentor helped the teacher participant by providing feedback and an opportunity to observe an experienced peer. The study results showed that mentoring had both a positive and negative influence upon the participants; however, all participants felt that their needs had been met. The attributes of mentoring consist of observations, facilitating, and building strong relationships.

Carr et al. (2017) stated that mentors may offer up to three years of support for novice teachers. Mentoring supports teachers by providing lesson plan guidance to providing teacher with peer contact resources. A mentor is a specialist in a particular subject area, and a mentor helps the teacher in many different ways. Together the mentor and teacher focus on a specific goal of teacher development. The findings stated the need to effectively seek mentors and provide teachers with a compatible mentor or this support will falter. Coaching is implemented to help teachers set short-term goals; and the communication is one-way, unlike mentoring. Also, coaching offers additional time for the participant to reflect and overcome challenges and concerns. This allotted time allows the teacher to ask questions and share their concerns. Throughout the coaching cycle, the teacher takes more initiative to develop and grow throughout

the learning process as they develop more autonomy throughout the coaching cycle (Carr et al., 2017). Upon conclusion of the studies, Carr et al. determined that mentors and coaches must fulfill the necessary requirements deemed to characterize a successful school support leader to support teachers.

Yirci, Ozdemir, Kartal, and Kocabas (2014) investigated coaching in the workplace. The qualitative approach explored the how and why of principals coaching their teachers or providing opportunities for collaboration. The following open-ended questions were asked to the participants: (1) Which coaching skills does your school principal use successfully in school management and staff relations; (2) in which coaching skills does your principal act insufficiently; and (3) if you were the principal of the school, to which coaching skills do you give importance? The sample was 149 teachers in both elementary schools and secondary schools. The participants provided insights into coaching skills that principals found to be successful and unsuccessful. The responses were coded into three categories, coaching skills accomplished, coaching skills failed, and vital coaching skills according to teachers. According to the results of the study, principal communication and praising teachers was a prominent failure, and a prominent accomplishment was establishing objectives, which must be provided to ensure coaching. Yirci et al. (2014) specified that coaching does provide participants with differentiated ways to meet the personal and professional needs in the workplace. The findings suggested that implementing coaching can meet the demands of the responsibilities principals have to fulfill as an initiator and facilitator. Coaching in a school setting can take many different forms, but they all share a common goal, which is to develop and support teachers. Research shows that mentoring and coaching are essential to teacher support.

Professional development, or teacher learning, is known to aid in teacher retention. Providing professional development to teachers in urban schools helps to strengthen both their teaching and learning (Appova & Arbaugh, 2017; Tricarico et al., 2015). Appova and Arbaugh (2017) explored teachers' motivations to grow in their learning. The 36 teacher participants from grades 6-12 in the Midwest were individually interviewed. In this study, topics of self-determination, teacher education, self-efficacy, the need to learn, self-development, policy, and accountability were the categories for the motivations to learn. The researchers' findings revealed that the major factor contributing to teacher participation in professional development was the teachers' desire for their students to succeed and grow academically. Appova and Arbaugh recognized the need for professional development opportunities to be based on quality rather than quantity. Professional development is vital to learning, growth, support, and transformation, especially in urban schools.

Review of Methodology and Methodological Issues

The literature reviewed focused on a variety of factors that contribute to teacher attrition and retention. These factors include teacher engagement, leadership support, schoolwide collaboration, teacher autonomy, teacher accountability, principal and teacher relationships, positive reinforcement, school culture, and climate. The respective factors were gathered from the perceptions of beginning teachers (Whipp & Geronime, 2017), experienced teachers (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014), principals (Brezicha et al., 2015), mentors, and coaches (Brezicha et al., 2015). The contribution of these participants has provided a general basis and understanding of some factors that contribute to both teacher retention and attrition; however, these studies lack possible next steps for further investigation and remediation. A limitation to Brezicha et al.'s (2015) study is the need to further investigate differentiated leadership concepts

and how they support understanding relationships. Therefore, it is crucial for this researcher to conduct further investigation and provide a remediation plan to benefit teacher retention and minimize turnover. In order to investigate teacher retention and attrition, the literature reviewed has contained elements of different research methods and designs qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods.

The strength of the qualitative studies in the literature attempts to explore and understand the problem and the relationship (Creswell, 2014). The ability to explore and understand the problem and the relationship is possible in qualitative studies as it is focused on a smaller - sample size. A case study includes open-ended questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The results are driven by participants' behaviors and investigative trends; however, within the qualitative study, participants' understanding and behavior may be based upon their personal beliefs (Savenye & Robinson, 2013). Understanding the participants' commitments outside their workplace and other relationships within the workplace would allow the researcher to develop a deeper understanding and analysis of how consistent expectations, priorities, and colleague relationships have an influence within the educational workplace and why this is important. This will help to ensure teacher commitment and help plan next steps based upon the analysis of commitment and with this analysis address the need for improvement. The data only represented the participants' characteristics and relationships of engagement, lack of recognition, and autonomy to school/teaching. The data did not display their commitment or show how they have grown from a beginning teacher to a second-stage teacher.

Quantitative methodology is also prominent in the literature, consisting of surveys, interviews, and, in some cases, using pre-existing data. Within the literature researchers such as Saiti (2015), Ford and Ware (2016), Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016), Eldor and Shoshani's

(2017), Jones (2016), Ronfeldt (2015), You and Conley (2015), Dou et al. (2016), and Urick and Bowers (2014) used a quantitative study in their studies. A quantitative study is data-driven because it takes into account specific variables and is developed around past data, which strengthens the approach that the researcher takes. Instruments are used to measure variables to provide the researcher with numerical data and these data are statistically analyzed (Creswell, 2014). However, a quantitative design can overlook the participants' viewpoints. This is a disadvantage because it limits the reasoning behind the actual study and it does not seek to improve the issue. There was also a disadvantage to Ronfeldt's (2015) study, which was a quantitative design with data representing many different topics; however, it was very limited as the research provided limited information on the different types of schools selected (Ronfeldt, 2015). The disadvantage to the Ronfeldt (2015) study was the large sample size and limited existing data to fully analyze the study results and have the ability to draw from specific, pre-existing teacher and school evidence.

Jacob et al.'s (2012) quantitative study focused on urban schools, which have faced teacher-retention issues. The pathway of the study focused on causes, consequences, and possible solutions encouraging teacher retention. Many experienced teachers known as the irreplaceables are leaving the urban schools and the data examined themes of attrition. These themes consisted of principal actions to retain irreplaceables and remove teachers who perform poorly, insufficient working conditions, the school cultures, and climate pushing away good teachers, away; and policies offer limited incentives for principals and district leaders to remediate their ways (Jacob et al., 2012). However, the study did not further address how to improve themes of teacher attrition.

Mixed-method studies use both qualitative and quantitative research methods and designs. Within the literature, Strunk et al. (2016), Thibodeaux et al. (2015), Whipp and Geronime (2017), Tricarico et al. (2015), Gu (2014), and Klar and Brewer (2013) used a mixed-method design in their studies. Using mixed methods strengthens the study overall (Creswell, 2014). It integrates open-ended questions, interviews, prior data, observations, and surveys into a collective study. The integration proposes a more complex analysis and covers more than just a basic understanding of how the data are represented. Although there are many advantages to a mixed-methods study, the disadvantage is the complexity of using both methods. Each method has specific attributes and when mixed the researcher may have too much data to consider (Hughes, 2016). Thus, all the data can become overwhelming if there is not a balance of qualitative and quantitative research. Too much of one type of study over another is a problem with mixed methods, as this type of study should be used simultaneously with each other.

Cucchiara et al. (2013) conducted a mixed-methods study; the advantage of their study was that gathering the results “side by side” reinforced the entirety of data (Creswell, 2014). One of the disadvantages to Cucchiara et al. (2013)’s study was the larger amount of data collected made it challenging to determine the experiences and past data collected on the positives and negatives of the implementation of the school turnaround. The limited insight from this was not able to support the successes of implementation of a turnaround. Thus, the study stopped abruptly as there was a large amount of data collected and analyzed; the study was unable to provide a relevant understanding to the question it was attempting to answer.

In addition, the literature focused on implementation of RCT in the social work or psychology environment, but not in a structured educational environment. The qualitative study by Anyikwa et al. (2015) extended over at least a 2-year period. This literature highlighted how

RCT has made a positive transformation in the lives of people through social interactions and growth-fostering relationships. However, a disadvantage to the literature is that the researchers did not state the why or how to further implement this theory. For example, in a correlational study, Hughes et al. (2015) uncovered higher percentages regarding emotional and environmental support; however, the uncovered results were not further implemented. Within this study of teacher retention, the most prominent area of support occurred within the workplace. Therefore, for the current study, the implementation of RCT into education was used to support teachers in the workplace and improve teacher retention by initiating a plan and a purposeful fulfillment for which administrators may strive. Alvarez and Lazzari's (2016) study addressed the positive transformation that RCT created and provided background knowledge for the application of RCT; however, the study was limited as it did not use the detailed information collected to discover different approaches to implementation in other settings or to use as remediation when needed in the settings of social work and psychology.

A qualitative methodology for the current study on teacher retention will contribute to prior qualitative research by strengthening the data known and create a deeper meaning by using the new data to address prior concerns and implement a plan based on the data to drive and sustain transformation. The data acquired through this study will not only inform principals of their influence on teacher retention but provide a foundation to support teachers. The entirety of this study will be sought in the educational field and the participants will connect to their teaching environment through context and acquiring personal information (Creswell, 2014).

A phenomenological design is considered to be one of the best approaches for the current study. This approach will allow for an in-depth detailed exploration, the ability to collect and analyze open-ended questionnaires, further investigation of factors in the environment, and data

will be collected with the final goal of contributing a new analysis, synthesis, and implementation to research. Also, the phenomenological design will make it possible for participants to focus explicitly on how their lived experiences have shaped their perceptions (Smith, 2015). Also, this study will seek to fill the gap of the lack of support provided to teachers by their administration, the lack of a consistent school culture and climate, and ensure that the relational cultural theory is implemented and fulfilled in the educational setting.

Synthesis of Research Findings

The reviewed research literature has focused on novice teachers and experienced teachers. Novice teachers and experienced teachers have encountered similar satisfactions and dissatisfactions, which have influenced teacher retention (Bennett et al., 2013; Gaikhorst et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2015; Nichols et al., 2017; You & Conley, 2015). The greatest satisfaction of these studies was collaboration among peers. Relationships promoted collaboration among peers as novice teacher and experienced teachers received support from both administrator and their colleagues. Administrator support provided professional development, mentoring, structured feedback, and teacher autonomy. This created a team and generated feelings of a supportive network (Bennett et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). The greatest dissatisfaction of these studies was the conditions in the workplace. Gaikhorst et al. (2017), Nichols et al. (2017) emphasized the importance for novice teachers to have a positive teaching experience comprised of relationship building and opportunity for professional growth during their first few years of teaching, because, without a positive experience, emotions controlled teacher turnover. The reviewed literature has further supported the opportunity for professional growth regardless of the teacher's level of experience, the support of administration is vital to

teacher retention because without support novice teachers and experienced teachers will leave (Bennett et al., 2013; You & Conley, 2015).

Furthermore, push and pull factors have influenced teacher retention and their personal responses and contributions to urban education. The factors are comprised of the teacher's aspects of psychological/personal and/or ecological/contextual. Research has revealed the push and pull factored throughout multiple qualitative studies. Knell and Castro (2014), Rinke and Mawhinney (2017), Adoniou (2016), Gu (2014) and Moate (2014) used intrinsic and extrinsic factors as a guide throughout their research. These studies collected data through interviews, observations, group work, and field notes. Moate (2014) claimed that school community and teacher development exist in teacher education and different communities. The initial development of teachers starts with a student-teaching experience (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). The initial, and on-going development of educating teachers support the teacher community and growth. Integration of on-going teacher development allows for obstacles to be conquered and supports teacher retention. The research indicated organizational and contextual elements are related to teacher retention. Rinke and Mawhinney (2017) and Adoniou (2016) brought to attention school context, educational reforms, and job dissatisfaction limits teacher development and causes teacher turnover. This can be mitigated through the construction of a positive workplace, which supports both teachers and principals. Motivation and leadership support are essential for successful teaching in urban schools (Knell & Castro, 2014). All of these studies supported the same conclusion that factors within and outside of the workplace contribute to teacher turnover.

Also, the research was comprised of school leader and teacher questionnaires and surveys. Researchers such as Saiti (2015), Thibodeaux et al. (2015), McCarley et al. (2014),

Dou et al. (2016), and Urick and Bowers (2014) used a 5-point Likert scale to determine the frequency and specific patterns of principal perceptions and teacher perceptions. The number of questions varied from study to study; however, the studies computed an “average score and all participants scores were scored within each particular factor” (McCarley et al., 2014). Saiti (2015), Thibodeaux et al. (2015), Dou et al. (2016), and Urick and Bowers (2014) concluded that principal leadership is vital to support teachers, especially during the times when teachers feel more pressured as more demands are placed upon them. These demands are unforeseen conflicts, high-stakes testing, and daily collaborative tasks. Principal perceptions and teacher perceptions also influenced what is known as push and pull factors. Push and pull factors can be deemed either positive or negative.

Additionally, the literature proposed different supports to improve teacher turnover and to build relationships in order to retain teachers. Included in the supports are mentoring, coaching, and professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2017; Carr et al., 2017; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Martin et al., 2015). Mentoring and coaching develop shared goals directly related to achievement between the learner and leader, which is important to building relationships and careers (Carr et al., 2017; Gordon & Lowrey 2016). A community of support will sustain workplace participants and build relationships (Moate, 2014). To combat the teacher attrition problems, principal coaching and other coaching support guide and sustain teachers, and reinforce community and classroom application (Yirci et al., 2014). Integration of instructional leadership and teacher knowledge promotes professional and relationship growth. In general, the researchers concluded that teacher retention is dependent on principal support and teacher support. In these studies, supports provided an organized structure, which benefits teachers’ relationships, growth, and retention.

RCT has made such a significant transformation in both the psychology and social environment (Anyikwa et al., 2015; Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). This researcher's study consisted of experienced educators and sought to determine and understand how teachers can be better supported through implementation of the relational cultural theory. The participants provided detailed, in-depth information (Creswell, 2014). The in-depth collection from a smaller sample size due to the type of qualitative design addressed the relationship needs within the participants' environment and further investigated the influence that relationships have on the workplace. The current study focused on exploring teachers' lived experiences in the experienced teachers' workplace on the topic of teacher retention. Also, this researcher's study explored trends gathered from their lived experiences focused on the five essential elements of RCT commitment, relationship development, leadership, collaboration, culture, and climate and how these elements relate or may contribute to teacher retention.

Critique of Previous Research

Although Jacob et al. (2012) provided consequences based on specific themes, the study only suggested two possible solutions. The first solution was to prioritize retention of the irreplaceables; the second solution was to improve the teaching profession through unity of rigorous expectations (Jacob et al., 2012). The data provided specific means to address the solutions; however, the study did not provide further possible solutions of remediation to fix the problems of teacher retention, thus the different perspectives or perceptions of this study can be viewed as incomplete.

Cucchiara et al. (2013) and Tricarico et al. (2015) interviewed and gathered information from teachers about their experiences in low-performing schools. The participants shared their perceptions of the social environment and the organizational environment. For example, (1)

“How do participants describe the characteristics that influence their five-year retention; and (2) how do participants describe their success as a teacher” (Tricarico et al., 2015). Each of these studies examined the participants’ interactions within the workplace, the working conditions, and schoolwide expectations. Both studies found positive working conditions and encouraged collaboration are essential to teacher retention in low-performing schools. The studies also addressed issues within the workplace. These issues included motivation/work ethic, differentiated instruction, family and community, organizational function, and organizational culture. The researchers found that with the proper support from leadership and other colleagues the issues were resolved and teachers felt supported and treated professionally (Cucchiara et al., 2013).

In the Cucchiara et al. (2013) study, positive and negative teacher experiences within the workplace were collected and analyzed. Their study concluded that in order for teachers to stay in high-poverty urban school environments, teachers’ experiences and concerns regarding the social environment and organizational environment must be addressed by leadership and colleagues by offering help to teachers. Collecting and sharing data focused on positive and negative teacher experiences strengthened the validity of the qualitative study and provided the reader with adequate information, which supported teacher retention.

Tricarico et al. (2015) concluded that the lessons learned from this study were specific ways to help teachers build personal, situational, and professional relationships. Implementation of these lessons learned can be applied to try to boost teacher retention; however, the study did not address how to specifically approach and apply the lessons learned, thus the study is incomplete. These studies were limited as they provided biased insights into what has influenced teachers to stay in challenging schools. As a next step, their study on teacher retention in a low-

performing urban school can be strengthened by the researcher focusing on either the social or organizational environment. Having too many pathways of perceptions can take away from the study's focus. A single-study conducted by this researcher sought to provide explicit findings, understandings, and the researcher will have the ability to explicitly focus on teacher retention. Over time, explicit studies will provide not only more complex insight, but will also help transform specific focal points of teacher retention.

However, in the quantitative study, conducted by Urick and Bowers (2014) the researchers did not have the opportunity to ask open-ended questions regarding the principals' perceptions and how their leadership influenced personal and professional tasks and performances due to the type of research design. The study only measured from 0 to 5, "0=no influence to 4= a great deal of influence" (Urick & Bowers, 2014). The studies were missing substantial feedback from the participants and the researchers were limited in their findings as the scale measures were left as ratings instead of participants' reflections. The researchers were not able to gather all the information and reasoning to support why the participant rated each question in a certain way. Further investigation of school leaders and teachers sharing their successes and concerns is important to understanding teacher retention. The outcome of the study showed that service climate influenced teacher work and teacher retention. The research advocated that a positive climate will "decrease teachers' intention to leave their work" (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017). Within this study, teachers used survey-scale ratings to share climate-for change-perceptions. The perceptions discovered were increased work engagement and increased job satisfaction. The study did provide significant findings; however, further investigation of implementing the survey results is needed to drive change through coding and sharing the

information with the school leaders would strengthen the findings and reinforce teacher retention.

Although school culture and climate are important to teacher retention and are considered to be two of the key aspects Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016), Ford and Ware (2016), and Eldor and Shoshani (2017) studies are missing data from previous research that explicitly supported the correlation between school climate and teacher retention. The research did not address the necessity of how relationships are to be developed and ultimately sustained to eliminate the retention crisis and improve teachers' well-being. Research describing RCT (East & Roll, 2015) offered insight into the framework of relationship development and how RCT has expanded throughout the years; however, a minimal amount of research based upon the studies conducted by Alvarez and Lazzari (2016) and Anyikwa et al. (2015) is known about the implementation of RCT and the influence it has had on relationships outside of psychology or social work. The previous research of these two studies failed to survey research of RCT within the education environment they have only focused on psychology and social work settings (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016); Anyikwa et al., 2015). To strengthen this theory, it is critical that the gap of transformational relationship development is addressed.

Chapter 2 Summary

Based on the review of the literature, teacher attrition and teacher retention are problems in low-performing schools. The topic of teacher retention has been studied over an extended period of time and has found that almost half of full-time teachers leave within the first four to five years, and about 40% of teachers leave within the first three years at a turnaround school (Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Jacob et al., 2012; You & Conley, 2015). This issue of retaining teachers is a significant problem, and a minimal amount of literature is

dedicated to why teachers remain in these hard-to-staff schools. In order to overcome this problem and gap in the reviewed literature, researchers must continue to investigate teachers' commitment in hard-to-staff schools and develop an understanding of their stories and reasons for teacher retention (Bennett et al., 2013).

In the review of the literature, researchers identified several factors that have contributed to teacher attrition. These factors include demanding workplace conditions, extensive hours, lack of support, school and principal support, maintaining commitment, autonomy, collaboration, culture, and climate (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Dou et al., 2016; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Gu, 2014; Jacob et al., 2012; Jones, 2016). These factors are intrinsic and extrinsic, and they affect school participants personally and professionally (Gu, 2014). As a result, the factors impact the school climate and culture, especially the instructional system, organizational system and development, environment, attainment, and achievement (Adoniou, 2016; Martin et al., 2015; Saiti, 2015).

In addition, these factors directly influence the irreplaceables and educational reform, along with the school climate and culture expectations. This influence is prevalent within the turnaround school environment, resulting in high teacher attrition, which has impacted the overall success of these schools. The literature review provided research regarding how teacher preparation, resilience, and experience may combat these issues within turnaround schools. Furthermore, the literature uncovered that irreplaceables and turnaround schools have a higher degree of success when their leader, the principal, provides the necessary support to their school environment. When strong leadership is in place, the schools' environment has a higher likelihood of transforming positively, therefore creating a collaborative culture and climate.

Redesigning the organization is likely to improve teacher retention and sustain the educational environment (Klar & Brewer, 2013). Teachers who feel supported by principals will likely be retained in urban turnaround schools (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013). The reviewed literature provided information based on teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions. However, the existing literature did not reveal how to develop a plan of remediation to decrease teacher attrition. In this researcher's study, RCT was implemented to determine whether or not it has an influence on teacher retention. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology that was used to explore teachers' lived experiences. This study's purpose, design, data collection, and analysis were included in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction to Chapter 3

This phenomenological study explored teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory (RCT) may contribute to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the educational workplace. As cited by Gordon and Lowrey (2016) and Kirkpatrick and Johnson (2014), an experienced teacher is a teacher who had at least four years of teaching experience. The study sought to uncover the phenomenon of teacher retention regarding the workplace, specifically in an urban turnaround school environment. This study examined teachers' lived experiences and how the reframed essential elements of RCT commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate may contribute to teacher retention. Teachers' lived experiences may have influenced their notions of the future as they continue to teach in an urban turnaround school environment. In the reviewed literature, more studies focused on novice teachers; however, this study focused on experienced teachers (Adoniou, 2016; Bennett et al., 2013; Gaikhorst et al., 2017; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Whipp & Geronime, 2017).). Turnaround schools are designated as low-performing schools, where teachers and principals are selectively recruited and who are believed to be capable of assisting in the positive transformation of the selective school (Reyes & Garcia, 2014). In this study the researcher recruited the most qualified teachers who taught in urban turnaround schools and resulted in this specific selection of teacher participants.

Teacher retention has been a major concern, especially in urban schools, as it has a direct influence on the school environment (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Jacob et al., 2012). Teacher retention has been a concern because it directly impacts the teachers' workplaces, and ultimately influences the school culture and climate. The school workplace is

impacted whether or not teachers decide to remain in their current workplaces, or move on to other schools; moreover, these decisions directly influence the culture and climate of the respective schools. Cucchiara et al., (2013) reported that teaching in a turnaround school was demanding as teachers encounter unforeseen challenges within the school's working conditions, such as switching grade levels on a yearly basis, fluctuating class sizes, and as a result, turnaround schools must be able to retain teachers on a consistent basis (Cucchiara et al., 2013).

A phenomenological research design guided this study in the investigation of teachers' lived experiences in urban turnaround schools and how these factors influenced their decisions in the workplace in regard to the phenomenon of teacher retention. This researcher explored trends gathered from teachers' lived experiences. Sharing teachers' lived experiences will provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon as it is experienced by many participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Also, the phenomenological approach made it possible for participants to focus explicitly on how their lived experiences shaped their perceptions, how their interactions have shaped their commitment to the workplace, and how they perceived the workplace (Smith, 2015). Researchers have stated the need to retain teachers and the prior research identified challenging factors that contribute to teacher turnover (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Jacob et al., 2012). Also, research informed readers of the positive difference retaining teachers has had in an urban school. Retaining teachers has been reported to be beneficial to school culture and climate (Bennett et al., 2013; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Saiti, 2015; Zeichner, 2014).

In addition to the phenomenological research design, the framework that guided the study was based on the relational cultural theory (McCauley, 2013). The relational cultural theory is mainly focused on five essential elements used to grow, develop, and foster relationships among

individuals. The five essential elements consist of the following: sense of zest or energy; increased sense of worth; clarity, which is knowledge of self and others in a relationship; productivity, which is taking action inside and outside of the relationship; and desire for more connection, which is seeking additional relational experiences. The research indicated these essential elements were important to grow and develop healthy relationships and were steps in the pathway to mutual development of building relationships (McCauley, 2013). Also, researchers found the relational cultural theory placed importance on building and sustaining a collaborative relational environment (Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). Moreover, the ability to collaborate was reported to be essential to the teaching environment as it became critical to the success of developing teachers and a positive school climate and culture. Therefore, for this researcher's study she reframed these essential elements based on specific educational criteria. These five essential elements throughout this researcher's study had shared themes of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, and culture and climate.

This chapter will include a description of the research design, a description of the participants, a description of the instruments used for data collection, a description of the procedures for collecting and analyzing data, the expected findings, and a description of ethical issues.

Research Questions

The researcher conducted this study to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' lived experiences who have remained in the workplace and why they choose to remain in urban turnaround school workplaces. These teachers' lived experiences were important to understanding why teachers choose to remain or leave their current schools and may have

provided an additional influence on how to minimize the teacher turnover that exists in the urban environments and promote teacher retention. Two important components of the study included the researcher observing and listening to teachers as they shared their lived experiences. These components helped this researcher to collect an adequate data sample set, which was studied to develop a strategy on how to remediate teacher turnover and provided the necessary support through the implementation of the essential elements of the relational cultural theory.

Throughout the research study, this researcher explored the following research questions:

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe to teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

R₂: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

Purpose and Design of the Proposed Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore experienced teachers' collaborative patterns, relationship patterns, and personal commitment in an urban turnaround school; how these patterns shaped their lived experiences as teachers; and the ways in which collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, climate, and commitment are presented schoolwide. The educational themes gathered from reframing the essential elements of relational cultural theory were used as the foundation to guide this study. This purposeful intention was to capture and describe lived experiences that may have contributed to teacher retention for the study's participants. Creswell and Poth (2017) reported that a phenomenological design emphasized the meaning and understanding that participants

uncovered as a result of their lived experiences. The researchers reported that this phenomenological design may have made it possible to identify and comprehend common factors among experienced teachers' lived experiences and allow for greater exploration and understanding around the phenomenon and how it may have an influence on teacher retention in urban turnaround schools (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Finlay, 2012).

This researcher's study also investigated the phenomenon of how to retain teachers. By analyzing teachers' lived experiences, this study helped to fill a gap in the literature related to why teachers choose to remain in urban turnaround schools. Prior researchers presented why teachers leave; however, minimal research has focused on retained teachers' experiences and how they sustained the rigorous demands of an urban turnaround school (Bennett et al., 2013). Thus, to fully comprehend the problem of teacher retention, the participants of this study shared their lived experiences. The use of a smaller sample size allowed for the researcher to uncover specific patterns and relationships (Creswell, 2014). This inquiry allowed for this researcher to explicitly understand teachers' lived experiences regarding teacher retention in turnaround schools. The study focused on the essential elements of the relational cultural theory, which were commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate regarding the relational cultural theory as it pertained to teachers' lived experiences. Moreover, participants' responses to an open-ended questionnaire and interviews focused on their lived experiences and how the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, and culture and climate may contribute to teacher retention.

Research Population and Sampling Method

For this study, the target population consisted of seven experienced teachers who were teaching in diverse grade levels and subject areas across five urban elementary turnaround schools. This specific population of teachers have experienced the phenomenon and were able to communicate their lived experiences (Van Manen, 2014). These experienced teachers had taught in urban turnaround schools and had taught for at least four years, so they fulfilled the minimum requirement for the purpose of this study as experienced teachers. As previously stated, experienced teachers for this study had at least four years of teaching experience. This researcher gathered data for this study from teachers who taught in the turnaround schools, which were located in a city in the Midwest. A turnaround school has been defined low-performing (Reyes & Garcia, 2014). These schools have transformed from failing schools to excelling academically and created an organized and consistent environment due to the turnaround school approach. The turnaround school approach used consistency in order to develop a consistent school culture and climate (Strunk et al., 2016).

It was essential for the recruited participants to have experienced the phenomenon that was explored (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The sampling method used for recruitment purposes was purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling allowed for the researcher to collect teachers' lived experiences in-depth and selected participants were able to provide detailed information in regard to the essential elements of RCT, which consists of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, and culture, and climate for the purpose was centered on a specific population (Patton, 2015). This type of sampling was selective as the participants were chosen based on their educational experience of at least four years of teaching gained from teaching in an urban turnaround school.

To narrow the range of purposeful sampling, this researcher used criterion sampling to ensure the recruited participants met specific criteria regarding their level of experience and teaching environment. Criterion sampling was appropriate as the participants had experienced the phenomenon as they met the criteria for the study. This type of sampling sought participants who met the criteria for this study to ensure a valid participant (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Snowball sampling provided additional participants and expanded the sample by asking a participant to recommend others who may be interested in participating (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Groenewald, 2004; Seidman, 2013). Use of additional sampling methods in the study aided this researcher in gathering the most appropriately-sized sample to meet all the specified criteria for a phenomenological study.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation is defined as the measurement tools the researcher used to acquire a study's data (Annum, 2017). During the process of instrumentation restrictions are placed on the researcher as he or she sought to select the most reliable measurement tool for his or her study (Annum, 2017). In this researcher's qualitative research, open-ended questions were used during interviews and this instrumentation tool was used to build from more generic to specific themes (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative research approach assisted the participants and the researcher to develop engaged and collaborative relationships, and the ability to analyze crucial patterns among the smaller sample size. A qualitative design allowed for the data to not only be interpreted, but it also to provide the opportunity for the ability to develop an agenda for change (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher focused on teacher retention and sought to understand teachers' lived experiences and why they remain in the urban turnaround environment. For the study, this researcher used an open-ended questionnaire as the basis for

assessing experienced teachers' lived experiences of the workplace and the study focused on the essential elements of RCT that consisted of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate.

The researcher first distributed the open-ended questionnaire as a field test, which was administered to people who were not to be participants in the study. A field test allowed for this researcher to evaluate the effectiveness and validity of the questions and the process of implementing the questionnaire prior to participants' sharing. At the end of field testing, this researcher answered the same open-ended questions asked of the participants in this study to be aware of her experiences and set aside these experiences. The researcher used the questionnaire to determine if the participants met the criteria of the study. The goal of the questionnaire was to add to existing research and to gain a deeper understanding of how the relational cultural theory may be implemented and used to improve and enhance teacher retention.

A questionnaire as an instrument allowed the researcher to take a more personal approach. This personal approach was used to promote a more complex investigation of the participants' perceptions and interviews were used to activate both speaking and expression of the participants' voices (Alshenqeeti, 2014). All seven participants completed a questionnaire, which is found in Appendix A. The questionnaire was comprised of concise and consistent open-ended questions. Furthermore, the questionnaire allowed for open-ended participation to further seek in-depth information based on the participants' lived experiences. The data acquired was helpful as open-ended questions provided the researcher with the ability to reflect, shape, and refine interview questions based on an increased understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017). After gathering the data from implementing the questionnaire, this

researcher conducted the interviews. The interview protocol/script of questions is found in Appendix B.

The face-to-face interviews are another vital component qualitative research. Interviewing deepens professional knowledge as it uses participants' lived experiences to investigate patterns and for the researcher to develop an understanding as participants describe their lived experiences with the phenomenon in mind (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Quinney, Dwyer, & Chapman, 2016). Interviewing makes it possible to construct knowledge because of the explicit interactions between the interviewer and interviewee (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The researcher observed, collected, analyzed, and synthesize the information acquired from all participants' interviews and coded the data using values coding and codes based on the essential elements of the relational cultural theory.

Data Collection

For data collection, the selected sample completed a questionnaire and participated in two interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes and focused on a predetermined group of participants. The open-ended questionnaire was designed to obtain responses of teachers' lived experiences from the predetermined group of elementary teachers who taught and have remained in urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. This researcher coded participants' responses first from the questionnaire and the first interview using values coding and open analysis. The coding process from the second interview explicitly focused on the essential elements of the relational-cultural theory, which are the following: commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, and culture and climate. Also, the responses that did not fit the essential elements of RCT were coded based on similarities of themes uncovered during data analysis. The responses to the questionnaire helped to determine

how the participants' lived experiences may be related to the relational cultural theory and teacher retention. The researcher asked the interview questions in a manner to encourage responses relating to the describe in-depth his or her experiences of commitment, relationship development, the turnaround school's leadership, school culture, and climate, and if and how these had shaped their experiences; and how these are related to the relational cultural theory. The literature reviewed revealed specific gaps pertaining to teachers remaining in the field, school culture and climate, and relationship development (Brezicha et al., 2015; Cucchiara et al., 2013; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016; Klar & Brewer, 2013). Thus, the gap in the reviewed literature uncovered the need to examine the phenomenon of experienced teachers remaining in the urban turnaround school system.

Reflexivity was an important element of the data collection and was used as a measure to ensure trustworthiness and credibility. Reflexivity enabled the participants and the researcher to develop an in-depth relationship, which allowed for the participants to be active and present as they shared their lived experiences in greater depth to share the "hidden nature of truth" (Quinn, 2013). Additionally, reflexivity-initiated discussion of professional practice and strengthened participants' self-knowledge and relational understanding, which may have fostered pivotal thinking and enabled the participants to confront strengths and weaknesses in the professional environment (Quinn, 2013). The use of reflexivity enabled the researcher to use deep interviewing techniques, which was important to this phenomenological study.

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews and collected data from the two interviews with each participant. Two interviews emphasized the exploration of not only the experience but also the meaning in the context of the participants' lives. Multiple interviews enabled each participant and the researcher to focus on the participants' lived experience, give context to the

lived experience, and develop a reflective meaning of the participants' lived experience. The series of interviews was used to uncover thoughtful, clear, and concise understanding of the participants' lived experiences. A series of interviews allowed for an investigation of the participants' lived experiences to have a place of context and reflect on its significance (Seidman, 2013). In the first interview, the researcher sought to reveal the context of the teachers' lived experiences. The first interview made it possible for the participants to focus on their lived experiences. The second interview focused on the essential elements of relational cultural theory and on how the essential elements may contribute to teacher retention. This process allowed participants to fully make meaning in relation to the phenomenon (Seidman, 2013).

The researcher recorded the interviews and took field notes to supplement the audio recordings. The recordings allowed the researcher to listen closely and carefully to identify words and phrases that were important and allowed for further synthesis and analysis of the notes outside of the interview (Vagle, 2014). All interview data were gathered and stored on the researcher's personal computer and transcribed onto a spreadsheet. The researcher used the web-based software NVivo in order to collect, analyze, and organize the in-depth information acquired from participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017). While all the data were stored and locked on a regular basis in a specific file folder on the researcher's computer, the researcher had a backup should a program fail (Vagle, 2014). At the end of each interview, each interviewee had the opportunity to ask questions and add any additional information about their lived experiences. At the beginning of the second interview, each participant was able to review the final interview transcript to confirm validity, credibility, and accuracy, which is a process known

as member checking (Seidman, 2013). Member checking was prominent in the collection of data as it ensured credible results.

Identification of Attributes

Face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to ask direct and specific questions regarding the essential elements of RCT. The researcher examined how participants shared their lived experiences, their reasons for remaining in the turnaround schools, and how the essential elements of RCT may have contributed to their decisions to remain in the urban turnaround schools. The interview questions were designed to uncover the essential elements of the relational cultural theory and how the implementation of these essential elements may be used to prevent teacher turnover. Also, the questions sought to discover if and how further urban turnaround schools could continue to support experienced teachers to prevent high rates of teacher turnover.

Important components to this study were to focus on teacher retention and to examine what contributing factors were important to teachers who remain in turnaround schools. An experienced teacher was able to share if and when his or her experiences may have impacted his or her experience in the workplace. Experienced teachers were able to speak on specific trends and understanding developed during their years of experience. It was important for this researcher to uncover specific patterns in relation to what experienced teachers had undergone on a daily basis. Reflection and understanding may be contributed to these attributes as experienced teachers may have had to act on sudden changes in the workplace.

Data Analysis Procedures

In this study, the researcher sought to determine how participants' lived experiences may have influenced their decisions to remain in the urban turnaround schools. The researcher sought

to determine if turnaround school teachers' experiences had a direct influence on teacher retention and what may have been the causes of teacher retention. To ensure explicit data analysis, this researcher used an analytical data analysis spiral approach. Creswell and Poth (2017) defined a data analysis spiral as an interconnected process used to analyze data. A data analysis spiral included the following steps: managing and organizing the data, reading and writing memos of emergent ideas, describing and classifying codes into themes, developing and assessing the interpretations, and representing and visualizing the data. The visual data representation of participant' responses can be found in Appendix F.

The first step to data analysis was for the researcher to manage and organize the data. To manage and organize the data analysis the researcher created files for each recruited participant, which was organized by their pseudonym. All folders and files were organized and secured on the researcher's computer. To access the files, a username and password were needed. Files were stored and secured using NVivo and the process ensured the researcher was able to efficiently analyze the data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The second step to data analysis was to read and write memos of emergent ideas. The researcher first read the data of the questionnaires and interviews in whole to understand participants' overall lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Then the next step was to analyze the data into parts to continue to make meaning of the data. While reading the data and listening to the audio-recordings, this researcher wrote memos of emergent ideas. Memos consisted of concise key thoughts, groups of words, and ideas gathered by questioning the data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Through the process the memos of emergent ideas, the researcher would stop "when ideas struck, and wrote memos" (Miles et al., 2014).

The third step to data analysis was to describe and classify the raw data to codes and then to themes. NVivo software was used throughout the process of data analysis. Questionnaires and interviews were coded based upon the common themes and themes regarding the essential elements of the relational cultural theory. This researcher used coding to sort and organize the data acquired into specific categories. Values coding was used as it was reflective of the participants' lived experiences because it included the participants' values, attitudes, and beliefs, which helped this researcher to understand and analyze teachers' lived experiences and actions. A value was comprised of principles, norms, and morals attributed to the participants. Attitude was comprised of the thoughts and feelings the participants have within themselves and in the turnaround school environment. Attitudes led to evaluative, reflective, and transformational concepts of beliefs. A belief encompassed values and attitudes as well as personal experiences and other interpretive perceptions of social society (Saldaña, 2016). All three of these encompassed the foundation of values coding and were appropriate in coding to analyze teachers' lived experiences in the first interview as it investigated experiences, actions, and understandings of teachers who remained in the urban turnaround schools.

For the second interview, the researcher coded based on specific themes of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. While coding, the researcher questioned the data in a systematic way, such as questioning, "What is it saying; what does it represent; what is happening; what kinds of events are at issue here; and what is trying to be conveyed?" (Patton, 2015). The five themed categories allowed for the researcher to focus on the specific categories that have had a negative influence on teacher retention and how the use of these five categories have an influence on experienced teachers remaining in turnaround schools. The coding categories were essential to teacher retention as these elements

of the relational cultural theory have a positive influence on the development and transformation of growth-fostering relationships (McCauley, 2013).

After describing and classifying codes into themes, developing and assessing interpretations occurred as the next step of the spiral to the data analysis. Interpretation was defined as understanding the data and what was learned (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Interpreting the data was a process of coding, coding into themes, and lastly organizing the themes from the data into more significant categories to explicitly understand the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2017). For the process of interpretation, this researcher used Grbich's (2013) guiding questions. The respective questions included, "What surprising information did you not expect to find; what information is conceptually interesting or unusual to participants and audiences; what are the dominant interpretations; what are the alternate notions?" (p. 195). Implementation of the guiding questions helped the researcher to assess and interpret statements, patterns, unexpected findings, and relationships of the data, and be able to gather compelling units and statements, which were comprised of interpretations. The final step to the data analysis spiral was to represent and visualize the data. During this final step of data analysis, this researcher made sense of the data by focusing on the overall meaning gathered from questionnaires and interviews. The three areas the researcher focused on were understanding "what happened, how the phenomenon was experienced, and essence of the data" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 199). Using the data analysis spiral and values coding as the procedures of data analysis allowed this researcher to efficiently and effectively make meaning of the data, which was focused on the phenomenon of teacher retention. Furthermore, as a result of the data analysis procedures, this researcher aimed to inform leaders and participants in the urban turnaround school environment what is contributed to teacher retention.

Limitations of the Research Design

A limitation of this study was the participant pool, which was restricted to experienced teachers' with at least four years of experience in urban turnaround schools. Conducting two interviews resulted in a limitation, by the time allotted to acquire the in-depth information needed for the study; flexibility in scheduling might have helped mitigate this limitation within the method of data collection. The selection of the target population was due to the shortage of research focused on experienced teachers who remained in urban turnaround schools. Another limitation of this study was that all recruited participants were female. In addition, a limitation to the study was the urban area where the research was conducted as the results might not have been generalized due to the urban setting and the small sample size.

Validation

Credibility. The credibility of this study was assured through the use of reflexivity and conducting two interviews designed to develop a trustworthy relationship among participants and interviewer. This provided an open-ended, in-depth inquiry, and thorough understandings for the researcher. The logic of the interviews ensured a foundation of details, which continued to be illuminated throughout the sequence of the interviews (Seidman, 2013).

Member checking was used to ensure accuracy, credibility, and validity of this study. Member checking provided the interviewees with the ability to determine the accuracy of the results by the interviewer restating the information acquired during the interviews. Member checking of the transcripts and the final transcript with the participants ensured trustworthiness and credibility of the study results (Seidman, 2013).

Dependability. The dependability of the study was reflective of the representation of consistency that was attained and maintained throughout the study. All selected participants met

the criteria for the phenomenon. The questions asked related to the five essential elements of the relational cultural theory. Direct questioning techniques and exploration through open-ended questions ensured communication and reflexivity among the study participants, as they shared their lived experiences by gaining further intuition, understanding, and built a capacity of understanding from the first to the second interview. To further ensure reliability in the study, this researcher directed interviewees to focus back to the phenomenon when needed and continuously kept the phenomenon in mind (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Seidman, 2013).

Expected Findings

The problem of teacher retention persists in urban schools, especially turnaround schools (Cucchiara et al., 2013). This study shared lived experiences from teachers remaining in urban turnaround schools (Hughes et al., 2015). This study focused on exploring teacher retention and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may be beneficial to growing and sustaining the urban turnaround school environment. Teachers sharing their experiences aided in understanding how leadership, school culture and climate, relationship development, and collaboration with their respective colleagues can influence teachers to remain or leave the educational environment. The findings revealed the need to have a positive, consistent, and collaborative school culture and climate. The data showed specific patterns and trends in relation to teachers' experiences focused, around fostering growth, and developing relationships with their, respective colleagues. Gathering data from more than one turnaround school enhanced the diversity of sources.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues were much more than guidelines in the study; the researcher anticipated and took appropriate steps to address any potential issues. Ethical issues were examined

throughout the study. In qualitative studies, ethical issues occur prior to conducting the study, the beginning of the study, in data collection and data analysis, data reporting, and publishing a study (Creswell, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2017). The researcher needed to be aware of the different types of ethical issues and framed the qualitative study design according to the process that Creswell and Poth (2017) offered as insights into addressing potential ethical issues. Epoche was used in this researcher's study to set aside her own experiences to minimize ethical issues. As the investigator, this researcher set aside any personal experiences to the best of her ability and had a new outlook in regard to the phenomenon of teacher retention (Husserl, 1931; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Moustakas, 1994).

Another ethical issue in the study included the privacy and anonymity of both the individual and the institution (Creswell, 2008). Participants from the study were selected based upon meeting the specified criteria regarding the level of teaching experience and teaching environment. Each participant was required to review a consent form and upon favorable review, execute a volunteer consent form. The consent form (Appendix D) was important as it specified data collection and informed the participants of how their results were to be used in the study (Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, & Cheraghi, 2014). The researcher did not persuade participants to partake in the study as it was voluntary. Each participant received step-by-step directions for the process to respond to the questionnaire and interview and was informed of his or her rights throughout the entirety of the study as a participant. All communication and information shared with the participants remained private and secure as the information was respected and treated in a confidential manner. Communication between the participant and the researcher took place in both written and verbal forms. The researcher recorded the interviews and secured the audio recording in a locked computer file with all questionnaires, written notes,

consent forms, and a copy of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Concordia University Board's approval letter.

The researcher anticipated some individuals may have wanted to participate in the study. Thus, the researcher planned accordingly and contacted a minimum of 20 experienced teachers across multiple urban turnaround schools. The researcher conducted interviews and planned accordingly for each interview as the interviews in the study were needed to strengthen knowledge and improve teacher retention. Also, when discussing the study and seeking participants the researcher remained cognizant of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic group, disability, or age (Creswell, 2008).

Confidentiality was a top priority in this researcher's study. The researcher took steps to ensure confidentiality in data collection and used; study codes replaced direct names of the sample group. A data matrix was used during data collection and allowed the researcher to locate and identify the information for the study. By using the software NVivo, the researcher analyzed and securely stored the questionnaire and interviews. NVivo was used to store the responses and generated reports. NVivo software provided the ability for this researcher to store the questionnaire and helped to uncover themes based on responses received from the participants. A username and password were required to sign into the home screen, and another username and password were needed for the researcher to access any folder files located on the researcher's personal computer. The researcher processed all textual data through NVivo, which was secured with a password to access the researcher's computer. Interviews were scheduled through either direct phone calls or by email, and each participant and the researcher signed a confidentiality agreement before data collection began.

Each interviewee received a confidentiality agreement, consisting of specific detailed information to the interviewees. This confidentiality agreement provided detail as to how the data would be reported, how results would be used, how data would be stored, and who would have access to the data. This researcher wrote and coded field notes and responses were locked through a secured username and passcode. The audio recordings and field notes were uploaded and scanned to a secure folder on the researcher's personal computer, which required both a username and password to access the folder. All information acquired was secured in NVivo and on the researcher's personal computer.

Conflict of Interest assessment. The researcher was employed as a teacher in a current urban turnaround school. Thus, the potential for researcher bias existed. However, to limit personal bias, the researcher recruited participants outside of her workplace. To minimize conflict of interest, the researcher only collaborated with participants outside of school hours. Communication between the participants and the researcher was conducted in a credible way to ensure the researcher remained credible and consistent when communicating with participants with the focus on the study steering the communication path. To minimize the conflict of interest, the researcher did not collaborate with the participants within the workplace regarding the study. This helped to ensure reliability, credibility, and minimize bias throughout the entirety of the study. The study included participants who were colleagues of some teachers in the researcher's current urban turnaround school. However, epoche allowed this researcher to remain as objective as possible during data collection and data analysis and did not allow for personal connections to conflict with the objectivity and credibility of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Moustakas, 1994).

Researcher's Position. As a teacher in the turnaround school network, the researcher was respectful throughout the study, and all information and knowledge acquired were sealed with confidentiality. As a teacher teaching in the same turnaround school environment as the study, the researcher had familiarity with urban turnaround schools. However, teachers in the study were not recruited within the researcher's school environment. All teacher participants within the study taught in different urban turnaround schools, other than the researcher's current school, but within the same school district in a city in the Midwest. Because the study explored teachers' lived experiences, the researcher gathered personal information as the participants shared their knowledge and experience gained throughout their years of teaching. The researcher's intentions regarding the study were used to bring a new perspective to the literature and add to existing literature. This study focused on the positives pertaining to the issues of teacher turnover and the topic of teacher retention and if the criteria of the relational cultural theory had shaped teachers' experiences a specific way regarding teacher retention. This researcher intends to teach and lead a professional development on the benefits of using the criteria of the RCT as an intervention and remediation to the issue of teacher retention after the study is conducted. Due to the researcher's familiarity to the turnaround school model, an advantage the researcher may possess includes, the ability to gain the participants' trust, as they shared their lived experiences in their respective urban turnaround school environment.

Ethical Issues in the Proposed Study. Before conducting the study, the researcher submitted the proposed study to the Concordia University–Portland IRB for approval. The IRB approval was required before evaluating the study site and participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Furthermore, prior to participant recruitment the researcher composed an introductory email letter, which was used to inform possible participants about her intentions of the study. Lastly,

each study participant received a consent form (Appendix D), which brought further understanding of the study and awareness of the study risks.

Chapter 3 Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore teacher retention in urban turnaround schools in a city in the Midwest and whether or not teachers' lived experiences influenced their retention in these schools (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Hughes et al., 2015). The study focused on teachers' lived experiences of the overall workplace and how the essential elements of RCT, which consisted of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, and culture and climate may contribute to teacher retention. This researcher used a phenomenological design to uncover the participants lived experiences (Creswell, 2014). The key actions of the study focused on the essential elements' commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of relational cultural theory and how the criteria may contribute to teacher retention.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to explore teachers' lived experiences in relation to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the workplace. Teacher turnover has increased at an alarming rate and has been a major concern, especially in urban turnaround schools (Cucchiara et al., 2013). Turnover has negatively influenced the urban turnaround schools' environments and only a limited amount of research focused on teachers who remain in the workplace (Bennett et al., 2013; Strunk et al., 2016; Gordon & Lowrey, 2016). The phenomenological study investigated experienced teachers who have remained in urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. As stated previously in the study and literature review, a turnaround school is a school, that has implemented a reform strategy, which is used to transform low-performing schools, and an experienced teacher is a teacher who has a minimum of four years of teaching experience (Cucchiara et al., 2013; Reyes & Garcia, 2014; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014).

The relational cultural theory (RCT) has been presented throughout the study as a framework comprised of building connections to grow, foster, and develop relationships based on five essential elements (McCauley, 2013). The five essential elements consisted of the following: sense of zest or energy; increased sense of worth; clarity, which is knowledge of self and others in a relationship; productivity, which is taking action inside and outside of the relationship; and desire for more connection, which is seeking additional relational experiences. The reviewed literature revealed these components as important to growing and developing

healthy relationships and as steps in the pathway to mutual development between individuals and groups (McCauley, 2013).

This study focused on specific educational themes gathered from reframing the five essential elements of RCT. The essential elements of RCT for this study consisted of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. The study was guided by the following research questions:

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

R₂: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

This researcher's role was to explore teachers' lived experiences in urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. During data collection and analysis, this researcher was employed as a teacher at an urban turnaround school in a city in the Midwest and taught several grade levels. While teaching, this researcher experienced high rates of teacher turnover and low rates of teacher retention. The researcher's experience in the teaching field and knowledge gained from the reviewed literature made it possible to understand the importance of teacher retention in urban schools, especially urban turnaround schools. A limited amount of research has focused on teachers who have remained in the workplace, more specifically teachers who have remained in urban turnaround schools, and the factors that attribute to their reasons for remaining in the workplace (Cucchiara et al., 2013). The teacher participants in the study were recruited within the same urban turnaround school geographical area; however, they did not

teach at the same school as the researcher. All participants in the study were recruited outside of school hours and communication happened outside of school hours.

The study is focused on factors that have been attributed to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute and be influential to teacher retention. A phenomenological study design was used to explore experiences from a predetermined group of teachers who have remained in urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest through data collection of an open-ended questionnaire, and two audio-recorded interviews. The data analysis within the study was based on seven participants' lived experiences in relation to teacher retention and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to retention. The researcher reframed the essential elements of the relational cultural theory (RCT) to meet the educational criteria, which included commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. Also, this study focused on the how and what has contributed to the participants' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools.

Throughout Chapter 4, a description of the research sample, a description of the research methodology and analysis, summary of findings, and a presentation of the data and results will be presented. The results of this study may bring a new perspective to the literature and add to existing literature by providing detailed information and insights into understanding factors that influence teacher retention, and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may be critical to decreasing teacher attrition in urban turnaround schools and promoting teacher retention in urban turnaround schools.

Description of Sample

The sample population for this study included seven experienced teachers who had taught at least four years and taught in urban elementary turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. For the purpose of the study, all participants had to have experienced the phenomenon researched (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The sampling methods for this study included purposeful sampling, criterion sampling, and snowball sampling. Purposeful sampling allowed this researcher to be selective in the recruitment process. Criterion sampling ensured that participants met the criteria, such as the level of experience and school environment for this study. Snowball sampling allowed participants to recommend others for this study to ensure the recruitment of a sufficient sample size (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Groenewald, 2004; Seidman, 2013).

The recruitment and sampling happened during the end of the third quarter and the entirety of the fourth quarter of an academic school year. The researcher sent an introductory recruitment email letter to ensure the sample met the criteria for the study and 64 emails were sent during the process of recruiting the participants in this study. The objective was to recruit a sufficient number of participants by sending introductory recruitment letters in email form to urban turnaround school teachers across many schools, which had met the criteria as an urban turnaround school located in a city in the Midwest. If a teacher did not reply, the researcher sent a follow-up email, contacted the schools directly, and left a message for the potential participants. Upon receiving correspondences to the first official email letter sent, all participants were provided with the researchers' personal email account.

All participants were selected purposefully based upon their years of teaching experience and focused on their lived experiences from teaching in an urban turnaround school. Criterion sampling made it possible to ensure that the sample had experienced the phenomenon of teacher

retention and met the criteria for the study. Furthermore, snowball sampling allowed for recruited participants and others to recommend other teachers who may be interested in participating in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The final sample included seven female teachers between the ages of 26 throughout 34 years old across five urban turnaround schools who each had a minimum of four years of teaching experience and a maximum experience of teaching for 11 years of teaching at the elementary level and who have taught in a range of grade levels and variety of subjects. Of the seven participants, three taught departmentalized classes, which included teaching English Language Arts (ELA) or Math and Science. In addition, three of the seven participants taught intermediate and middle-grade levels and four out of the seven participants taught primary grade levels. Each participant completed an open-ended questionnaire and participated in 2 interviews of approximately 60 minutes each. This researcher assigned an alphabet pseudonym, such as Participant A to protect his or her identity (Seidman, 2013). Throughout the study, each participant will be referred to by his or her pseudonym name. A table with participants' demographics will be found in Appendix E.

Participant A. Participant A was a Hispanic female experienced teacher who has taught for five years. For most of her career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant A stated, "I would describe myself as a teacher who is passionate, stern, and a nurturing teacher. I am always looking for ways to improve my practice." Working as a teacher to her meant having a job that is fulfilling and doing her personal best to help students reach their goals and understand they are the future. One of her most rewarding moments in her career was when one specific student showed exceptional reading growth at the end of the year from the start of the school year. She decided to participate in the study to assist and help the teaching profession and is humbled as she wants others to better understand the teacher, especially in the

profession. Participant A planned to continue her teaching career in the classroom and over time wants to fulfill a role as a teacher leader to promote teacher voice.

Participant B. Participant B was a White female experienced teacher who has taught for more than five years. For the majority of her career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant B stated, “I am a very organized preventative, relentless, creative, problem-solving, open-minded, thoughtful, and an emotionally supportive teacher.” Working as a teacher to her meant being someone who can help her students pursue their curiosity about the world and thus understand more about themselves. Education and teaching are fundamentals to a person’s growth and understanding of themselves. She felt lucky to support her students through this journey for part of their schooling. One of her most rewarding moments in her career was when a group of students started their own reading group outside of the structured classroom schedule, thus being an example of lifelong leaders. She decided to participate in this study because she knows someone who is working on a doctoral degree and wanted to pay it forward by giving back to other doctoral students. She believed that researching education is helpful to improvement and development of the teaching field. Participant B planned to continue her teaching career in the classroom for at least 5 more years; however, in 30 years she may or may not remain in the classroom.

Participant C. Participant C was an African American female experienced teacher who has taught for more than five years. The majority of her teaching background was in early childhood and, for the majority of her career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant C described herself as a teacher by stating:

I have a very strong conviction for equal access to education and that drives me as a teacher. I am passionate, which can sometimes lead me to be very hard on my kids

(students), but I try to be warm and fun as well. I'm also a very loving teacher. My students need lots of emotional support and that causes me to be very loving and affectionate.

To be a teacher, to her, meant shaping the future and building youngest learners' minds and personalities. One of her most rewarding moments in her career was after implementing various interventions a student excelled in both academic and social areas. She was interested in participating in this study because she had the opportunity to help other educators and provide information and support to them by discussing teaching experiences. Participant C planned to continue her teaching career and be culturally responsive in her practice as she remains committed to education.

Participant D. Participant D was a White female experienced teacher who has taught for more than five years. For the majority of her career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant D described herself as a teacher who, "puts kids (students) first and I plan for what I can in order to be the best prepared to handle the unpredictable, and I am patient." To be a teacher, to her, meant to make a school an environment where students feel safe, loved, and can learn without being afraid of being wrong. One of her most rewarding moments in her career was helping a group of readers achieve reading mastery and increase their reading levels. She was interested in participating in this study because of the opportunity to help other educators and believes in the importance of supporting each other. Participant D saw herself continuing to teach in the classroom and throughout the years continue to do more things for the students and hoped to take on a role as a mentor/coach later in her teaching career.

Participant E. Participant E was a White female experienced teacher who has taught for four years. The majority of her teaching background was in primary and, for the majority of her

career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant E stated, “I set high expectations, but I am also relaxed (calm), flexible, and understand that students learn differently.” To be a teacher, to her, meant to help others. One of the most rewarding moments in her career was watching students grow both academically and socially throughout the school year. She was interested in participating in this study because the study was focused on teacher retention and she was starting to feel the stress and, in her experience, had started to question if an urban turnaround school environment was sustainable for teachers. Participant E planned to continue teaching in the future and may or may not teach at her current school.

Participant F. Participant F was an African American female experienced teacher who has taught for more than five years. For most of her career, she taught in the same elementary grade level. Participant F stated, “I am a teacher who is organized, disciplined, and passionate.” To be a teacher, to her, meant to inspire and to change lives for the greater good. One of the most rewarding moments in her career was creating an opportunity for students to understand self and their community. She was interested in participating in this study because she was able to contribute to the project with her perspective of teaching and share her experiences for the study. Also, she believed it is good to share her journey with others to help build their research. Participant F continued to see herself in the teaching field and sharing her passion with others.

Participant G. Participant G was an African American female experienced teacher who has taught for four years. For most of her career, she taught in upper elementary grade levels. Participant G stated:

I would describe myself as firm, hard-working, reliable, and supportive teacher. My students know that my first and top priority is to see them succeed and graduate from

college, and although every class session might not be the most engaging, I do what needs to be done to get them there. My students know that they can count on me for anything whether it is related to academics or not. They know that I have high expectations of them so, that they are prepared for the world outside of their grade level and beyond.

To be a teacher, to her, meant making her students' personal and academic goals her top priority. It means being understanding and culturally responsive to knowing that every student is unique and has different strengths and abilities. Also, it meant building and having great relationships with students, parents, and community members. It is about believing that all students can achieve and succeed when they are provided with differentiated instruction and provided with all the necessities to succeed. Lastly, it meant to be a facilitator of the learning. One of the most rewarding moments in her career was both the teacher and student seeing the student growth throughout the year and receiving a thank you from her students. She was interested in participating in this study because when she first received the formative recruitment letter it seemed like a good opportunity for her to share her experience. Also, she felt that it was important for teachers who have experienced urban turnaround school teaching to share with others and those who may be considering a similar opportunity. Participant G saw herself continuing to be a teacher and building relationships with the students and plans to continue working up the ladder. She would like to always have a position that allowed her to interact with students and adults.

Research Methodology and Analysis

The data analysis of this study reflected teachers' lived experiences in relation to the phenomenon of teacher retention. This phenomenological study made it possible to focus

explicitly on a smaller sample size and collect in-depth data from teachers who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The relational cultural theory was used in this study as the framework that explored teachers' lived experiences and was comprised of the five essential elements (McCauley, 2013). This study analysis explored the essential elements of the RCT and how they contribute to teacher retention. This study focused on how the essential elements may contribute to the education workplace to support teachers and to aid in creating and executing a plan based on the essential elements to improve teacher retention. The analysis may be used as a foundation to support teachers and further inform principals and others in the educational environment of the elements' influence on teacher retention.

Based on prior research, the relational cultural theory was implemented in both the social work environment and psychology environment and, as a result, reduced negative interactions and fostered the development of positive relationships (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). For this study, this researcher explored the essential elements of RCT through data collection acquired from an open-ended questionnaire and two audio-recorded interviews. The study addressed factors to sustain teacher retention and to ensure explicit data analysis that was observed through an analytical data analysis spiral. A data analysis spiral was an interconnected process used to analyze data through an analytical spiral approach rather than a sequential approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017). A phenomenological research design promoted an in-depth detailed exploration of the study, as well as the ability to collect and analyze an open-ended questionnaire and interviews. This design investigated factors in the environment, and data collected contributed a new analysis, synthesis, and implementation to research. Phenomenology, interviews, transcripts, audio-recordings, epoche, and the steps to data-analysis spiral were essential to the research methodology and analysis.

Phenomenology. This researcher used the phenomenological approach to make it possible to understand multiple lived experiences, commonalities within these experiences, common factors among teachers' lived experiences, and gain an in-depth understanding of teacher retention, which was the studied phenomenon and how the phenomenon has influenced their decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Finlay, 2012). This approach made it possible for participants in this researcher's study to focus explicitly on how their lived experiences shaped their perceptions, how interactions shaped their commitment and workplace perceptions (Smith, 2015). The small number of participants in this study allowed for in-depth exploration of teachers' lived experiences. Reflexivity was used and allowed for the smaller number of participants, and this researcher to develop strong relationships, which made it possible to share their lived experiences in greater depth and use deep interviewing techniques (Quinn, 2013). This researcher used the phenomenological design and reflexivity to develop an engaged and collaborative trusting relationship with the participants throughout the entirety of the study (Creswell, 2014; Seidman, 2013).

Interviews, transcripts, and audio recordings. Before participant interviews occurred, this researcher emailed a recruitment letter, a consent form for confidentiality purposes, and a signed executed copy of each consent form was returned to participants. After this researcher received a completed questionnaire, all files were locked and stored on the researcher's personal computer, which required both the username and a password. The researcher scheduled a time block of approximately 60 minutes with each interviewee to meet for face-to-face audio-recorded interviews. The two interviews totaled approximately 120 minutes. Information and communication between the participant and the researcher remained private and secured by this researcher, as all information was respected and treated with confidentiality as a top priority.

At the beginning of each interview, this researcher re-stated that each interview would be audio-recorded. This researcher presented an opening statement, which described the purpose of the interview and a privacy statement was declared to re-inform participants of their confidentiality and rights. The interview questions scripts can be found in Appendix B. This researcher conducted two in-depth audio-recorded interviews after she received the completed questionnaire from each participant. While conducting the interviews, this researcher composed field notes for each interview. Multiple interviews conducted by this researcher made it possible for an in-depth exploration of participants' lived experiences. This in-depth exploration provided a thoughtful, clear, and concise understanding of the participants' lived experiences. Both interviews shared a common goal of fully making meaning of participants' lived experiences regarding the phenomenon (Seidman, 2013).

This researcher conducted all interviews face-to-face, and by doing so, this researcher was able to examine how participants shared their lived experiences. The first interview included open-ended questions that focused on participants' lived experiences and who they were as teachers. The second interview focused on participants' lived experiences in relation to the essential elements of the relational cultural theory. Each interview conducted was logged on the interview log, which can be found in Appendix C. The interview log (Appendix C) was important as this researcher used this log to organize the interviews and provided a space for questions asked by the participants and/or researcher.

After completing the audio-recorded interviews, this researcher created a transcript, and a copy was provided to each participant. At the end of the second interview, this researcher created a copy of the final transcript that included all details from both the first and second interviews. This researcher used member checking to determine accuracy, credibility, and

validity of the participants' responses. Member checking was important as the interviewees reviewed the transcripts, and the completed transcribed report at the end of the interview series to ensure the accuracy of the results by the interviewer from restating the information acquired during the interviews (Seidman, 2013). Six of the seven participants reviewed the transcript for the first interview prior to participating in the final interview. The seventh participant only reviewed the final interview transcript, which consisted of both interviews, due to an unexpected family medical emergency. This researcher sent a copy of the final transcript, which consisted of a completed transcription of each interview, to each participant by email at the end of the interviews. If needed, this interviewer followed up to confirm that the participants received the transcript copy and reviewed it to ensure accuracy, credibility, and validity of the information from their lived experiences.

The researcher recorded the interviews with an audio-recording device and wrote field notes to supplement the recordings. Recording the interviews allowed the researcher, to listen closely and carefully to identify important words and phrases to analyze outside of the interviews (Vagle, 2014). By recording the interviews, this researcher listened to the recordings to accurately transcribe the participants' lived experiences. The researcher secured the audio-recorded device in a locked drawer. The researcher had an additional recording device in her possession for each interview should a technological issue have occurred. Also, an application was downloaded onto a phone device in case the other recording devices malfunctioned during the interview series.

When conducting the interviews, the researcher used guiding question probes to gain a more in-depth understanding of the participants' lived experiences. For example, this researcher would ask questions such as, can you tell me more about that experience or provide a specific

example? Why was that important to you and how did that make you feel? This helped the researcher to view the phenomenon “as it was” through the participants’ lived experiences (Husserl, 1931).

Data Analysis Spiral. Data collection, data analysis, and writing are interrelated throughout the entirety of this research study. While in the field conducting research, this researcher listened in greater detail, took field notes, and used reflective thinking through the process of an analytical approach. An analytical approach provided this researcher with the ability to efficiently analyze the data through the process of a spiral approach rather than a sequential approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The data analysis spiral as mentioned in Chapter 3 consisted of the following steps: managing and organizing the data, reading and writing memos of emergent ideas, describing and classifying codes into themes, developing and assessing the interpretations, and representing and visualizing the data.

During the earliest stage of data analysis, this researcher managed and organized the data into digital folder files for each recruited participant. This researcher organized these files with pseudonyms to locate information efficiently and prevent a breach of confidentiality (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Included in the digital files were the consent forms, questionnaires, transcripts, and audio recordings. Separately, this researcher created email folders for each participant and all correspondence between the participant and researcher was stored in the appropriate email folder to manage and organize the study communication and data. The researcher locked and secured the folders and files on her personal computer. To access the computer’s home screen a username and password were required. In addition, another username and password were required to access the folders, email, and other stored files on the personal computer. Throughout this step, this researcher became familiar with using and navigating NVivo

(Creswell & Poth, 2017), which was the web-based software used in this study. This researcher used NVivo to store the completed questionnaires, transcripts, and audio-recordings into a file. This made it possible, for the researcher, to maneuver and search through the data (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Reading and writing memos was the next step to this researcher's data analysis. After receiving the questionnaire results, this researcher read the data in whole. Then all interview transcripts were viewed by this researcher. During this step, this researcher needed to acquire a sense of the overall participants' lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Before analyzing the data into parts, this researcher analyzed the data to make sense of the data in whole. This researcher read and reviewed the data collected several times and listened to the audio-recordings three times during the process of reading and writing memos of emergent ideas, such as similarities to other participants' responses, and similarities and differences of groups of words. At the time of reading and listening, this researcher wrote memos on the questionnaire, field notes, and transcripts. This step of data analysis provided this researcher with the ability to follow the progression of the ideas throughout the interviews.

After reading and writing memos, the researcher began the next step in the spiral of describing and classifying the raw data into codes and then into themes. This researcher used NVivo software and, as a result, the researcher was able to reflect, shape, interpret, and manage the data acquired from all questionnaires and interviews into codes and themes. This researcher questioned the data systematically and used values coding to interpret and evaluated how participants' lived experiences reflected their values, attitudes, and beliefs (Patton, 2015; Saldaña, 2016). Values coding helped this researcher to understand and analyze teachers' lived

experiences and actions for those who have remained in urban turnaround schools. The researcher used a color-coding process during this step of the analysis.

NVivo was applied throughout the process of data analysis and coding data into themes. As stated previously, the researcher used the essential elements of RCT as themes throughout the data analysis and other significant themes. In NVivo, nodes are known as stored codes, which were used to manage and organize the data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). For each initial node, a sub-node was created in NVivo to ensure a structured coding system. A large number of codes was initially stored; however, by the end of analysis, a smaller number of codes existed due to emerging commonalities. This researcher coded using different queries and classification tools to identify relationships, locate relationships, and differences within the data. Then, each node and sub-nodes were classified by identifying common attributes and categorizing the data by looking beyond the initial codes to identify themes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2017). This researcher used the coding query during the node process as it organized the data and noted recurring ideas and concepts when analyzing questions (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

Following describing and classifying codes into themes, developing, and assessing interpretations occurred as the next step of this researcher's data analysis. Interpreting the data was a process of coding, coding into themes, and organizing the themes from the data into more significant categories to explicitly understand the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This researcher used Grbich's (2013) guiding questions as previously stated in Chapter 3. Through the implementation of the guiding questions, this researcher assessed and interpreted statements, patterns, unexpected findings, and relationships of the data, and gathered compelling units and statements, which were comprised of interpretations.

The final step in the data analysis spiral was representing and visualizing the data, which can be found in Appendix F. Through the process of representation and visualization, this researcher made sense of the data through a textural and structural description by focusing on the overall meaning of the data. The three areas the researcher focused on were understanding “what happened, how the phenomenon was experienced, and essence of the data” (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 199). After understanding the three areas this researcher analyzed the data more in-depth with these questions in mind to ensure detailed analysis.

Summary of the Findings

This researcher collected the data and the results through a questionnaire and by conducting two interviews. The presentation of the data and results was organized by each research question. The participants described their lived experiences in depth within their urban turnaround school environments. Overall, participants enjoyed teaching and shared their passion for educating learners throughout the two interviews. The findings showed that overall participant satisfaction within their respective urban turnaround schools was positive regarding their lived experiences.

The findings of the questionnaire and interviews showed that the seven participant responses were significant regarding the two research questions based on the essential elements of the relational cultural theory. The seven participants stressed the importance of the essential elements of the RCT, the significance of the essential elements, and how these elements are encountered daily and shared that they are committed to their students. All seven participants shared that they sought support when needed and shared that support helped them to work through challenges inside and outside of the classroom and felt that when support is not present, burnout is prone to happen. All seven participants stated how important relationships are

regarding success inside and outside of the classroom. Each of the seven participants stated that relationships need to exist among teachers, leadership, and students and shared the importance and need for self-care, support, strong and present leadership, and student participation. In addition, the seven participants stated that there are many challenges that must be overcome daily, and they have constantly sought ways to overcome the challenges. Five of the seven participants shared the impacts from teachers who have experienced burnout, who have left mid-year, and the negative influence it has had on urban turnaround schools. These findings will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Presentation of the Data and Results

The data and results of this study focused on teachers' lived experiences who have at least four years of teaching experience, and who have taught in urban turnaround schools. The data and results of this study are presented by the research questions, specifically, based on the specific themes uncovered. The first research question was organized by themes of challenges participants' have experienced in urban turnaround schools, their experiences overcoming challenges, contributing factors, and descriptive factors, of teacher retention, which were revealed through data analysis. The themes consisted of challenges in urban turnaround schools, how to overcome challenges, teacher involvement, flexibility, importance of self-care, students, supports inside and outside of the workplace, remembering why they entered the profession, and sustaining an urban turnaround school environment. Challenges were prominent in the data analysis and played a key factor in teacher participants' experiences and their decision pertaining to remaining at their current school. Overcoming these challenges through their lived experiences were significant to fully making meaning of factors ascribed to teacher retention. The second research question was organized by the themes based on the essential elements of the

relational cultural theory. The themes for the data collection and data analysis of the second research question centered on the specific educational themes gathered from reframing the five essential elements of RCT, which consisted of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate.

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

Challenges in urban turnaround schools. Participants shared challenges in their lived experiences. When participants had encountered challenges, they shared how they have dealt with these challenges, which revealed factors ascribed to teacher retention. The following challenges helped participants make meaning of factors they ascribed to teacher retention, and how they have sustained teaching in an urban turnaround school environment. Of the seven participants, six shared that their students challenge them. The challenges occurred due to student behaviors, class size, and a variety of student learning levels. Participant A stated, “These behaviors can factor into the teaching environment.” Participant E stated, “Student behaviors in our school are to the point that it is impacting teaching.” Another challenge shared among five of the seven participants was a result of excessive working hours (long working hours). This excessive number of working hours included time within the school day and additional time spent outside of the school day to ensure adequate preparation for teacher duties. Due to the number of working hours, two of the seven participants shared they were not able to continue their education. Participants shared that the number of working hours continued to be a challenge; however, they (participants) continue to work because they know their students will benefit from the time spent. Although, all seven participants work overtime with their personal

and professional goals in mind, the number of hours and workload led to feelings of stress and teachers becoming emotionally drained. For example, one participant shared that she took it personally if a student was not making progress.

Three of the seven participants agreed that another challenge was parent involvement. Participant B stated, “that the public perception and the economic instability of the teaching field were challenges.” Also, stated by four of the seven participants included the lack of resources, professional development, administrative trust, and excessive testing. In addition, unequal funding and economics are perceived as challenges. Participant B shared, “Lack of resources is a challenge in the teaching environment because we need things such as interventionists, or if a teacher is absent a qualified substitute teacher.” Another example of the presented challenges, Participant E shared was that there was no room for continued teacher growth at her school due to there not being any professional development opportunities. Also, the lack of administrative trust was a challenge as administration was focused on the paperwork logistics instead of student behaviors, and addressing teacher needs. Participants F and G shared that excessive testing provided a challenge as it impacted the overall classroom environment due to high stakes testing.

Additionally, Participant B stated a challenge by saying, “With any group of kids I am very empathetic, so if kids go through traumatic things that weighs on me if I do not practice self-care.” Participant F expressed, “What is challenging to me with my teaching experience is the whole notion of standardized. We are different, and we are people, and we are not going to get to these set goals, and I really struggle with the box they put us in with everyone having the same instruction. I believe this eliminates creativity, and the power to really bring out one’s true self.” Participant G agreed and stated, “I believe children feel overwhelmed with putting multiple assessments in front of them and in turn it is stressful to the teacher.” Participant G

experienced a challenge, to be finding substitutes for teacher absences. Another challenge revealed from Participant G was teachers or other staff members resigning on the students in the middle of the school year. Although these challenges are present in urban turnaround schools, seven participants shared their lived experiences on how they have overcome these challenges, what they ascribed to teacher retention, and how they have sustained in their decisions to remain in an urban turnaround school. Although these challenges were present in urban turnaround schools, participants shared their lived experiences on how they have worked to overcome challenges, which uncovered factors they ascribed to teacher retention, and how they have unwavering in their decisions to remain in an urban turnaround school.

Overcoming challenges. To overcome the challenges revealed through data analysis, seven participants shared their lived experiences on how they have overcome challenges in the workplace. Also, included were their personal experiences of how they have felt based on the challenges within the school, challenges with administration, and more specifically, how support of school and administration had been beneficial to them so that they could continue overcoming challenges. If students were a challenge, five of the seven participants shared that they first try to take a breath and take a step back to visualize the bigger picture to understand what happened with the student or students. For example, Participant A communicated with the student or students and did her best to understand the entirety of the situation and what caused the student to act out. The seven participants stated that they communicate directly with the students and try to figure out additional strategies to overcome the challenges. Participant C stated, “I take time to reflect. I am willing to try different techniques and I always want to be there for them (students) and not judge and I want to help out.” Participant B overcomes challenges as she:

Focuses on self-care to sleep enough, eating well, exercise, and have a very supportive system between family, friends, and therapy. Also, important to not only monitor students it's important to monitor self and check-in with self to complete and keep that emotional consistency, which is the goal with our students as well.

One participant shared with her students her childhood story about her background and her reasons for being a teacher to overcome challenges (Participant A). Another teacher combated the challenges of the lack of resources and funding by writing grants for outside resources and found other ways to challenge students and allowed additional time to understand her students, and how to best respond to their different learning styles (Participant F). Participant G stated, "When it comes to the testing challenges and multiple assessments I continue to motivate my students to do their best." She also stated, "As far as teachers leaving mid-year if I know there is a teacher that may leave I do my best to figure out how to support them." All seven of the teacher participants did their best to support their students, and most of the teachers acknowledged the importance of self-care.

Furthermore, six of the seven participants shared how their urban turnaround schools supported them to overcome the challenges presented. Of the seven participants, six agreed and stated that the school leadership can be helpful in supporting teachers to overcoming the present challenges in the urban turnaround school environments. Participant A stated, "We are fortunate to have a supportive administration who are problem solvers and value teacher input. I always keep in the back of my mind how supportive administration is key." Additionally, leadership can be supportive by promoting the practice of self-care. Principals (leadership) could promote self-care for themselves and make sure they are present for their teachers to be the best they can be (Participant B). Another way to support teachers was for the school to not move teachers to

different grade levels every year as staying in the same grade level creates a sense of consistency among the teachers and students.

All factors combined created a positive school culture fostered by leadership and teacher retention (Participant B). Participant B stated to overcome these challenges, “I think that letting teachers take a break when they need it and helping the stability of the school system.”

Participant C believes that more collaboration is beneficial to help support her and, in her experience, can be supported further by the leadership and staff helping to figure out ways to involve more families in the community. Participant D expressed, “Turnaround schools are hard, they ask a lot, and they do not give much freedom outside of their set curriculum. Teachers may get upset because they cannot be creative, which in turn makes some teachers unhappy.”

Schools can help to overcome this challenge by having additional staff and having more opportunities for leadership to be present in classrooms. Participant F also shared the importance of having additional staff such as an assistant in the classroom, and the ability to have a curriculum that was more differentiated and not as structured. Also, administration (leadership) can build relationships with students schoolwide. Making sure to have clear and consistent schoolwide expectations would be beneficial, too (Participant E). She enjoyed how supportive and helpful her principal (leadership) had been in helping to support her. Participant G revealed:

The school could support me in overcoming the challenges through the process of hearing what teachers have to say about the recommended assessments and which ones we keep. To combat the challenges of teachers leaving I feel that we can be supportive and provide extra support for them. Honestly, I think those teachers’ leaving impacts the students as they could have a lack of trust, hesitate to build relationships and the teacher will not be as strong of an advocate for students if they are not giving 100%.

Although participants faced challenges the following factors ascribed to teacher retention helped them to overcome these challenges. The factors included teacher involvement, flexibility, self-care, students, support inside and outside of the workplace, and remembering why of entering the profession.

Teacher involvement. The seven participants were involved either inside their workplace or outside of their workplace, and the six of the seven participants had roles both inside and outside of the workplace. Each participant shared that she worked professionally outside of the workplace, which consisted of lesson planning, grading, looking for additional resources, and reviewing student data. The seven participants were involved in activities outside of the workplace or after-school programs. For example, Participants E and G coached sports outside of school hours. Of the seven participants, five took part in different committees at their urban turnaround schools. Participant D stated, “I feel that there are a lot of opportunities to grow here and use talents that you have.” Participant B expressed:

I have made a conscious effort to readjust my involvement as I would normally take on any project that was asked of me and I realized as the year went on wasn’t the best way to help my school/community. I realized that I needed to readjust where all energy and time was put.

This participant shared the important role that self-care had in her life. Another participant also shared the importance of self-care and having a balance both inside and outside of the workplace. Participant G was involved daily inside and outside the workplace working with youth. She enjoyed being involved outside of the workplace because “it allows me to teach them things outside of the academic world.” Also, Participant G shared that she was a mentor outside of the workplace.

Flexibility. Five of the seven participants shared that in their teaching career they had opportunities for a new day. For example, Participant B stated, “Tomorrow is a new day and there is always a chance to change and readjust.” Participant G agreed with Participant B, and stated, “I always tell myself that tomorrow is a new day. I knew that going into teaching is an interesting profession and that no two days are alike. I remind myself that tomorrow is a new day and no two days are alike.” Furthermore, Participant A shared that teaching was not a “one size fits all approach” having the room to teach with the flexibility to meet the needs of her students has been significant to her lived experience. Five participants stressed the importance of tomorrow as being a “new day.” This new day provided participants with the ability of flexibility.

Self-care. The factor of self-care was explicitly stated and practiced by five of the seven teacher participants. Participant D shared that she made sure to plan time for herself, as the career of teaching was very demanding; however, she made a conscious effort to focus on self-care. Additionally, Participant B found that self-care is both an advantage and disadvantage in her experience. An advantage was that self-care helped her to overcome challenges and rejuvenate her to sustain in her respective teaching environment. A disadvantage was that specific time needed to be set aside from teaching to ensure she practiced self-care. Self-care tied back into participants’ personal involvement outside of the workplace and the different types of ways participants were involved.

Students. As stated previously, a total of seven participants shared their challenges and how they overcame these challenges. During this time that participants shared their lived experiences, they shared that they remained due to another important factor, which consisted of the students. Participant B shared that there is always room for improvement and the continuing

to grow in her teaching practice and helping students to become lifelong learners. Participant C acknowledged her enjoyment of learning about her students and getting to know her students helped find teaching more enjoyable. Also, Participant D shared in her experience how each student was interesting and so different from other students; this increased her enjoyment for teaching. Student' successes promoted positive lived experiences among participants.

Support inside and outside of the workplace. The different supports included co-workers, leadership, family, friends, therapy, God, and prayer. Participant B shared that her leadership shared in collaboration, as a result, supports teachers. The seven participants agreed that support was necessary to their lived experiences. Participant F stated, "My favorite has been the staff, and I enjoy working with the leadership and develop a notional of a team." Participant C agreed and shared that she worked with a wonderful group of teachers who were always willing to help and, as a result, she felt supported by her co-workers and leadership. Participant E concurred that her past and present students helped her to continue her teaching career with the support of co-workers. Participant G added, "I have supportive co-workers and leaders who share the same mission and goal even through challenges." One participant shared that through therapy she coped with different traumatic events that happened in her students and her students' family lives. Also, four of the seven participants shared how they had friends both inside and outside of teaching that factored into being a support system in their lived experiences. Another commonality stated among six of the seven participants was the support of their families.

Remembering the "why" of entering the profession. Four of the seven participants shared how personal factors of following their passion helped to energize them to return daily and/or yearly. Participant G revealed, "I really like that I have been able to live out my dream." Participant C concurred and shared, that the teachers were resilient, and all the passionate

teachers helped to uplift her, which reminded her of her passion to teach. Participant D shared that she had purpose in her career and shared how as teachers are the building blocks for teaching the students in the world and “we make those people” and as a result “we have a purpose in our life.” Furthermore, Participant F shared, “I have the ability and opportunity to change lives. The opportunity to inspire and motivate a life is rewarding for me. I have found my passion and my joy, which rejuvenates me.” At the end of the year, four of the seven participants shared that they recognized their benefits of the work they had put into the school year and, as a result, they had a desire to return the following year. Also, teachers saw a stronger purpose that helped to keep them motivated (Participant C).

Sustaining an urban turnaround school environment. All seven participants shared their lived experiences regarding teacher retention and their reasons for returning on a daily and annual basis. Participant A stated, “There is not a one-size-fits-all approach and the flexibility among all the staff and students is a necessity as well as outside resources.” Participant B shared, “Teacher retention to a teacher’s capacity to differentiate and to meet the students where they are at.” Participant C said, “Support will always be welcomed, and the career is hard.” Participant D said:

The job is hard, and it is important to have an outlet and practice self-care if not this can lead to health problems, which causes turnover. Teachers need to feel supported and supports need to be in place or teachers will leave.

Participant D continued by saying, “I think more focus should be placed on teachers as a person and teachers as a team.” Sharing positives among others and continue to build relationships is important to urban turnaround schools (Participant D; Participant F). Participant E shared, “You get so exhausted that you don’t even remember why you got into it in the first

place.” Participant G stated, “I feel like you have to understand the why in order to know and understand where your perfect fit is.” The seven participants shared how they understood teacher retention in life. Six of the seven participants stated that they returned the following day or the next school year because of the students. Of the seven participants, four sustained the environment because of their coworkers and strong administration. One participant shared that her religion, prayer, patience, and finding passion helped her persist in the environment. Of the seven participants, two shared the importance of having a support system outside of the work such as family, friends, and therapy. Two other participants shared they returned due to their personal experiences.

Of the seven participants, five participants shared how they were renewed in knowing that tomorrow is a new day. Participant F stated, “I am too invested, and my heart is here as much as I pull my hair out from different challenges my heart is here.” Having exceptional coworkers, sharing the same school mission and goal, and supportive administration (leadership) is an advantage (Participant G). Three of the seven participants stated that their leadership, involvement, and enrichment of opportunities were important. Participant B found, “I see the benefits to my work that year and would love to do that again and starts from square one at a new year, but then at the end of the year it repeats itself over.” Participant B and three other participants stated that their passion rejuvenated them. Another participant shared that having teacher friends at other schools helped to support her and develop in her practice. Additionally, Participant A expressed, “In regard to my personal experience I wanted to have a job where I make a difference and even on my worst days there is a point when I look back on the moment that went well.” Social change “make a difference” was recognized by this participant as being

significant to her lived experience changing students' lives. Overall, the participants' satisfaction in urban turnaround schools was positive.

R2: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

Commitment. All seven participants described their dedication to their urban turnaround schools by sharing their experiences and personal factors they have attributed to commitment within the workplace. Six of the seven teacher participants described their commitment as being extremely dedicated and feeling devoted to their schools. Participant A said, "My commitment is very committed at my school and I feel a sense of loyalty to my school." Furthermore, Participant B stated, "My commitment is very strong because I believe in the leaderships and the school as it is constantly readjusting to be better and to be a better school for our students." Participant D expressed, "It is really easy to stay committed to a team when everyone shares the same belief." Participant C attributed her sense of commitment to her personal connections at the school, with the students, and to the neighborhood community. Although Participant F was extremely committed as well, she stated, "That commitment made me take a step back this year." Due to factors of work ethic, planning outside of school hours, planning other activities outside of teaching, lack of self-care and limited sleep, this participant had to reassess and made a change by lessening her strong commitment and focus on self-care, which in turn rejuvenated her. Participant E is committed to her students and had a strong work-ethic; however, she experienced inconsistent administration (leadership). More than half of the participants arrived early before the school day has started and remained after the end of the school day participating in meetings, events, and classroom responsibilities. Participant G concurred, "My commitment

in my current urban turnaround school teaching environment is that I am usually the last person to leave because I love what I do, and I want to see everyone succeed.” Six of the seven teacher participants stated that their commitment was a result of personal factors, such as work-ethic, strong conviction, and passion and also professional factors, such as, students, team, and leadership.

Positive collaboration. All seven participants agreed that in their experience collaboration among teachers in the workplace was favorable. All seven participants revealed how they experienced collaboration, their understanding, and importance to life, factors they attributed to their collaboration and ways collaboration was exhibited in the workplace. Participant A declared, “Two brains are better than one.” All seven participants shared in the belief that there was always room to continue to improve and more ways to collaborate. For example, Participant D shared, “Collaborating at school has impacted my life outside of school, because when I do not agree with an opinion someone said, I am more open to listening and I respect the speaker as an individual.” This participant and three other participants stated how they grew to become more patient and willing to set aside their own personal beliefs to understand what others were saying. Out of the seven participants, six had experienced time, which was set aside outside of school hours in order to collaborate among colleagues. More specifically, four of the seven participants collaborated and led their colleagues in scheduled meetings before and after school. In Participant C’s experience, she understood that, “I rely on others, so they may be relying on me.” Additionally, Participant B stated, “First and foremost collaboration is frequent in my classroom and integrates student leader and voices by knowing who my students are from collaborating.” Participant G declared:

Honestly, on a wider scale I feel that we collaborate with one another and by doing so I feel like we can achieve the goal of student attainment and achievement. I feel like we have each other's back, and we have teamwork as well sharing the same goal. The factors that attribute to my collaboration are due to having all the roles that I do in the workplace.

Participant F acknowledged that her collaboration could have been improved as she described herself as an introvert; however, schoolwide she believed there was a collaborative balance among colleagues. A factor that she attributed to her collaboration was trust. Overall, Participant F participated in collaboration exhibited in the workplace through school committees, after-school opportunities, and weekly/biweekly meetings with grade level teams and the leadership. Also, collaboration was exhibited in the workplace through professional development, parent communication, staff meetings, and after-school programs. Participant E stated, "That collaboration among teachers is strong; however, there is a lack of time for teachers to communicate with administration (leadership) and there are not any after school events that take place, such as, staff outings. Although with not much opportunity for collaboration, Participant E stated, "Collaboration between teachers is strong." Participants shared in the belief that there is always room to continue to improve and more ways to collaborate. Other factors that attributed to collaboration were the value of collective knowledge, the desire to learn new things, and the desire to become even better, for students, and teamwork. Participant B recognized that; "Collaboration is exhibited in strong vertical alignment of grade levels and weekly meetings based on content and not grade. Teacher to teacher it is working hard and sharing resources back." Positive collaboration was exhibited by all parties in most of the participants' schools; however, collaboration for one participant's lived experience was very

negative between teachers and leaders. There was a lack of trust and urgency to issues within the school. Additionally, Participant D expressed, “Relationships are built from the initial collaboration and the want for the students to do better. You can build social relationships off of this and strengthen the other relationships.”

Relationship development. Throughout the interviews, all seven participants described their experiences of building relationships. All seven participants shared their feelings based on their lived experiences and ways that relationships were built in their respective urban turnaround school. Lastly, all seven participants shared their understanding and importance of relationships in their lives. All seven participants experienced relationships in their urban turnaround schools to be positive, respectful, and professional; however, they experienced different “ranges of the types of relationships” (Participant B). Out of the seven participants, four participants agreed that relationships looked different and varied, based on the individual. For example, referring to co-workers, some individuals were extroverts or introverts, and some kept their personal and professional lives separate (Participant B; Participant D; Participant F). Participant A expressed:

I have always felt supported and helped. I feel like it cannot be all work and business.

There has to be time to ask the normal non-teacher questions. I feel like I have had this with my grade level partners. I built a personal relationship beyond the classroom and seek to want those friendships outside of just being a colleague.

A total of seven participants had experienced building and developing relationships in various ways, which consisted of team-building exercises at the beginning of the school year, professional development activities, weekly meetings, icebreakers during a meeting consisting of sharing “who you are,” staff outings, academic meetings, and during sports games. Another

important experience, shared by Participant B was, “Being vulnerable in order to learn.”

Overall, milestones and challenges in the workplace were achieved and overcome by building and developing relationships. Participant D experienced the following:

There is never a perfect atmosphere 100% of the time and sometimes there might be times when we disagree and get under each other’s skin, but that goes back to building those relationships. We are able to return the following day to discuss this, and we always make sure we come back to common ground. I believe this allows us to have high morale and culture in the teaching environment.

Relationships in urban turnaround schools were visible and experienced daily. Two of the seven participants shared that relationship development has decreased over time due to the demands of the workload, scheduling, and disconnections in the workplaces. Five of the seven teachers in this study had experienced limited time to develop relationships due to time not being allotted within the school day or outside of the respective participant’s classroom. For example, one participant was unable to collaborate and build relationships outside of the hallway in which her classroom was located, as time did not allow for it. Throughout teacher-appreciation week, four teachers stated that they enjoyed having extra time in the morning and during preparation time to build relationships with those who do not teach the same grade levels. Also, five of the seven participants shared the importance of relationships in the classroom and how these relationships continue to build throughout the school year with students. Part of building relationships was being a team of teachers, students, students and teacher, and as a team focused on shared goals (Participant B; Participant G).

Participant B shared the importance of relationship building as, “I have friends who are very different, and, through this, I have the ability to relate to different types of people and this

helps as well with my understanding of my students and a wide range of styles.” Participant A agreed, and further stated, “It always comes back to the Golden Rule and if you have relational trust and have built a relationship it will make it easier to understand the individual in the moment of frustration versus personal frustration.” All seven participants shared the importance of relationships and benefits of relationship development. Lastly, Participant G stated, “You want to always make sure that you want to have relationships as you never know when you will need people or when you will be able to help someone else.”

Leadership. Throughout the interviews and questionnaire responses, all seven participants revealed their experiences with leadership in urban turnaround schools. A total of seven participants described the leadership, the aspects they liked, and areas of growth. Six of the seven participants shared the importance of their experiences with leadership and all seven participants shared what made leadership so important. Participant C stated, “The leadership is very supportive and definitely appreciate us and I feel like I can go to my principal (leadership) about anything.” Participant B had similar experiences and expressed, “The principal (leadership) was always raising the bar, organized and clear in communication, attends to staff culture, was intuitive, and wants to protect learning time, which was valuable, and it sets the town for the building.” Participant D, Participant F, and Participant G revealed that in their experiences, leadership was supportive and open to listening to their teachers whether it was with challenging information or sharing stories of success and to implement new strategies based upon teachers’ feedback and were solution oriented. Participant E shared that the leadership currently led more outside of the school; however, when leadership was present in the school leadership was respected by other staff and students. Also, four of the seven participants shared the importance of receiving quality feedback from leadership and how it helped to continue to

improve teaching practices and to develop even more for the students. Although Participant A experienced positive interactions with the leadership, she felt that the workload given was sometimes overwhelming and as a committed teacher she always gave 100%. Participant A expressed, “Ideally you want to be able to do all these things, but do not want to be stressed. I feel like this plays a role in teacher burnout and trying to figure out what to prioritize.” The areas of growth or disadvantage of leadership consisted of workload, structural/policy agendas, being too open (blunt), micromanaging, bureaucratic, and solely focused on student attainment.

Leadership was important to all seven participants and all participants shared their experiences and how leadership had the ability to make a difference. Social change through making a difference was not only important to participants’ experiences, but also to their experiences regarding leadership. The seven participants referred to effective versus ineffective leadership and the importance of leading by example because the leadership set the overall school example. They stated that a leader is someone to admire and without this type of leadership, how can anyone grow professionally (Participant A; Participant B; Participant G)? Four of the seven participants agreed that a leader of good quality had positive relationships, and the ability to collaborate with different types of people. The leadership had a team mindset, was not focused on I (self), believed in their staff and was on the same level (Participant D).

Participant E stated:

Having a principal (leadership) that you feel is supportive and that you support their mission and cause will make you want to work harder, and make you want to stay because you’re working for something you believe in rather than what am I doing this for if it is not something they (leadership) believes in.

Participant G said that, “as a teacher you want to grow and develop professionally and that is possible through working with those (leadership) who set the example and be the model.

Leadership was essential to teachers’ lived experiences and how their leaders experienced the workplace.” Participant F stated:

Collaboration, relationship building, and leadership are all important and I have realized that I have to let people do what they feel comfortable doing and what they are good at. I have realized the importance of these and how it has spilled over into other areas of my life.

Participant D expressed, “Whoever leads the school creates the culture of that school and if that person is organized the school will be organized.”

Culture and climate. All seven participants described their experiences of the culture and climate in their respective turnaround schools. A total of seven participants shared factors they experienced that attributed to a positive and consistent culture and climate. Everyone agreed that the culture and climate overall was fine at their respective turnaround schools. Of the seven participants, four found that, at end of the year and with the start of administering standardized assessments, the culture and climate seemed to be tense and challenging; however, they still believed that teachers remained dedicated, consistent, and collaborative. Participant F experienced the culture and climate to be very strict regarding student consequences and expectations; however, the teachers schoolwide continued to be consistent and, as a result, consistency helped with the structure throughout the school year. Participant B found, “The culture and climate are very organized, proactive, very calm (which is hard to achieve), hardworking, and dedicated.” She experienced the calm to be possible because of the leadership and collaboration. Participant D stated, “Factors that attribute to a positive culture and climate

consist of leadership and everyone giving 110% and have a shared goal, which is focused on what is best for kids.” Participant E added, “Administration (leadership) really sets the tone and if you are professional and positive then that creates a professional positive presence throughout.” Another participant also experienced the importance of a positive and present leader as a factor to a positive and consistent culture and climate. Other factors that participants attributed to a positive culture and climate consisted of being proactive, collaboration, effective listening, team building, and receptive to feedback.

Participant A expressed, “A consistent culture and climate goes back to mindset and remembering that people are people and reminding self of wearing different hats and everyone has different limitations.” Additional factors included setting an example, being calm, to participate in professional development, good communication and the ability to discuss issues, administration (leadership) consistency, emotional consistency, dedication, shared goals and priorities, and self-accountability. Participant F revealed, “In order to be consistent you have to keep going, you have to get up, and figure it out and try something new. To be successful you must keep going.” One participant shared her lived’ experience at a different urban turnaround school and how the culture and climate had a negative influence on the environment. The participant realized the negative space led to teacher burnout; however, her commitment never wavered. The participant shared that her workplace turned negative due to inconsistent school expectations, superficial school leaders, and lack of communication and support. As a result of the variance in the culture and climate, the urban turnaround school was unsustainable.

Chapter 4 Summary

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to explore teachers’ lived experiences in relation to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and more specifically, how the essential

elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to teacher retention. This study presented the findings gathered from seven female teachers who shared their lived experiences across five urban turnaround schools located in a city in the Midwest. The researcher collected the data for each participant from a questionnaire and two interviews. Chapter 4 described the sample, the implemented data methodology, and analysis and highlighted the data and results of their lived experiences in urban turnaround schools. Chapter 5 will include a discussion of the phenomenology study's results, limitations, implication of the results for practice, and conclusions based upon the research questions. Chapter 5 will reveal unexpected findings and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to explore teachers' lived experiences in relation to teacher retention in urban turnaround schools and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory (RCT) may contribute to experienced teachers' decisions to remain in the workplace. This phenomenological study addressed the need, and a pathway to overcoming challenges, improve, promote, and sustain teacher retention, especially in urban turnaround schools with the implementation of the relational cultural theory (RCT). This study focused on the positives of experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools, and how RCT contributes to teacher retention.

Chapter 1 introduced the background of the problem, the framework of the problem, the relevance, and significance of the study, and a definition of significant terms presented throughout the study. Chapter 2 presented the relevant literature that has been reviewed by the researcher, which made it possible for the researcher to determine an appropriate methodology, and to identify specific gaps that pertained to teachers in urban schools, especially in urban turnaround schools, and the relational cultural theory. Chapter 3 presented the methodological approach, which was used as the research design for the study and included a detailed description of the research population and sampling, instrumentation, data collection, attributes, data analysis procedures, limitations of the research design, and ethical issues. Chapter 4 presented the data analysis and results gathered from conducting the research, which included a description of the recruited participants, the methodology and analysis, summary of the findings, and a detailed presentation of the data and results. Chapter 5 will include a summary and discussion of the phenomenological study results, how these results are significant and relate to the literature,

limitations of this study, implications of the results for practice, policy, and theory, recommendations for further studies, and the conclusions based upon the research questions.

Summary of the Results

The study was guided by the following research questions to explore the lived experiences of urban turnaround school teachers and their decisions for remaining in their respective urban turnaround schools:

R₁: To what factors do experienced teachers in a turnaround school ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decision to remain in urban turnaround schools?

R₂: How do the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

The relational cultural theory (RCT) was presented throughout the study and was used as the framework for this study. RCT is comprised of five essential elements, which are used to build connections to grow, develop, and foster relationships (McCauley, 2013). These reframed essential elements consisted of educational themes and were used to address the research questions, as well as the uncovered themes gathered from data analysis, which, consisted of challenges in urban turnaround schools, overcoming challenges, teacher involvement, and sustaining an urban turnaround school environment. The first research question was focused on specific factors that experienced teachers ascribed to remaining in urban turnaround schools, and the second research question was focused on the essential elements of the relational cultural theory, and how they may contribute to teacher retention. All information collected from the questionnaires and interviews were focused on teachers' lived experiences. Teachers shared

their lived experiences within urban turnaround schools and how these experiences have influenced their decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools.

Teacher turnover and teacher retention were prominent in the seminal literature and have continued to be prominent in new literature since this study began. Since this researcher conducted her study, Young (2018) found it to be a challenge to recruit and retain teachers. The main challenge was hiring and retaining the most effective teachers. The study concluded the need to support teachers and retain teachers in the workplace to ensure effective teaching. Furthermore, according to Bland, Church, and Luo (2014) as cited in Young (2018), a positive workplace, school leaders, and teachers consecutively teaching the same grade level were ways to retain teachers. In this study participants shared similarities with the researcher's study focused on the importance of a positive workplace, support, and teaching in the same grade level consecutively. For example, Participant B stated, "The mobility that urban turnaround schools have is a challenge as teachers are leaving and then we have to readjust, and the school may be moving teachers to a different grade level, and this adds to the daily tasks." Most participants in this study agreed that it was important for teachers to be provided with the opportunity to become experts in their grade level by continuing to teach in their respective grade level and be provided with opportunities to attend professional development to continue to grow and develop in their learning and teaching practice. In addition, Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) concluded similar findings with Young (2018) and found poor working conditions and school demographics to be a deterrent to retaining teachers. Participants within this researcher's study not only stated the need to continue their learning through applicable professional development but also for their voices to be heard within the workplace to help negate challenges.

This study addressed the positives pertaining to teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools (teacher retention) with an explicit focus on the relational cultural theory, and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory may contribute to teacher retention. Throughout this study based on the results of the questionnaire and interviews, the overall participants' satisfaction in their workplace environment was positive. Participants shared their passion for educating learners throughout the entirety of this study. All participants recognized the significance of support in the workplace, which pertained to commitment, collaboration, relationship building, leadership, culture, and climate. Also, all participants sought to be supported, which enabled them to be better teachers and learners both inside and outside of the classroom. Participants felt that when support is not present, burnout is prone to happen, which may lead to their lack of involvement, resenting the leadership and/or seeking to change schools. In addition, relationships in the workplace whether it be with co-workers, leadership, or students, were significant to participants' lived experiences.

Overall, the results of this study were presented based upon the participant responses to the two research questions regarding the RCT. Relationships were crucial to the success of both the student and teacher. These relationships exist among teachers, leadership, and students. Participants highlighted the importance and need for self-care, support, strong and present leadership, and student participation. In addition, the participants stated that there are many challenges that must be overcome daily, and they are constantly seeking ways to overcome these challenges. Participants also shared their lived experiences regarding teachers who have left mid-year, as a result of teacher burnout; therefore, they shared the negative influence it had on urban turnaround schools.

Discussion of the Results

The results of this study were significant regarding factors ascribed to teacher retention, how these factors influenced participants' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools, and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention. Participants described their lived experiences regarding their commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. All participants shared the importance of these essential elements in their lives, and the influence these elements have within the workplace. The themes of research question one pertaining to this study were challenges in urban turnaround schools, overcoming challenges, and sustaining an urban turnaround school environment, which focused on additional themes of teacher involvement, flexibility, self-care, students, support inside and outside of the workplace, and remembering the "why" of entering the profession. These themes were a result of coding the challenges shared by teacher participants in their respective workplaces and how they have personally resolved these lived challenges. These challenges uncovered specific themes related to other commonalities found in data analysis that were ascribed to teacher retention. This approach provided an in-depth exploration and adequate time for teacher participants to reflect and share their lived experiences in relation to the phenomenon of teacher retention. The themes of research question two were explicitly focused on each essential element.

Challenges in urban turnaround schools. The most prominent challenge encountered among the participants was focused on students. A few teachers shared a challenge related to student behaviors, while most teachers shared the challenges of workload and number of working hours to ensure students' successes. As mentioned previously, all participants had a passion for their careers; however, some participants had experienced pressures because of

challenges. These participants continued to seek ways to support their students whether it be academically, socially, and/or behaviorally. Other challenges among the participants consisted of a lack of resources, administrative trust, excessive testing, unequal funding, difficulty in finding substitute teachers, and current teachers resigning in the middle of the school year. Additionally, another challenge was the structure of the urban turnaround school environment as it prohibited participants from having the ability to be creative in delivering instruction to meet the academic, social, and behavioral needs of all students, as a result of everyone having the same instruction. Participants experienced the influence of excessive testing both on teachers and students. Due to excessive testing, participants experienced increased stress due to the overwhelming struggle of institutional testing. As a result, participants voiced their concerns by speaking to leadership and their co-workers as this had been a continuous struggle not only for the participants but also for their students. On the other hand, participants who experienced support in their environment, and those who had been given the opportunity for teacher autonomy experienced increased fulfillment. Although there may be additional challenges present in urban turnaround schools, the participants only discussed their lived experiences pertaining to the challenges.

Overcoming challenges. To overcome the challenges participants mentioned the importance of reflection, communication, support, and consistency, which helped to overcome challenges. Many teachers shared they communicated directly with their students to better understand when problems arose. When needed, all participants were able to reflect and try different strategies to overcome the challenges regarding students. Another participant shared that taking time to reflect on the problem helped her to keep her emotions constant, enabling her to best address the student challenges when they occurred. Additionally, participants conveyed

personal factors and motivations to be helpful in overcoming challenges with students. Other ways that participants overcame challenges present in the urban turnaround schools' environment consisted of seeking outside resources, clear and consistent schoolwide expectations. Participants were not afraid to ask for help when needed or work countless hours to write grants and try to recruit outside resources to help their students and school. The countless hours of work conveyed not only teacher involvement but also the flexibility of teachers regarding their students and personal factors. Participants experienced another challenge to be schoolwide expectations.

While the majority of the participants taught at schools with clear and consistent schoolwide expectations, some of the participants stated these expectations were inconsistent throughout the school year. The expectations remained; however, these expectations were not executed with fidelity. Therefore, challenges were still present in the workplace, additional challenges arose, and participants' lived experiences were impacted. To further combat the challenges present in the urban turnaround school environments, participants shared the significance of teacher involvement, flexibility, self-care, supports inside and outside of the workplace, and remembering the "why" of entering the profession. It is apparent there is a need for a clear and consistent workplace, and for co-workers, leadership, and other staff members to help support everyone involved in the workplace.

Teacher involvement. All participants were actively involved in their workplace, outside of their workplace, or involved both inside and outside of their workplace. Participants' involvement was important to their overall professional and personal development and satisfaction. Participants conveyed the importance of having a balance between their professional and personal duties. Teachers who focused more on professional involvement both

inside and outside of the workplace found it to be overwhelming at times, and as a result, exhausting. Yet in other experiences, participants found their involvement to have a structured balance. Having a balance both inside and outside of the workplace helped to renew the participants, so they would have the ability to return daily and yearly. A few participants shared their experience in their involvement in the workplace and explained the importance of "saying no" when they felt overwhelmed or too busy. They experienced this to be a challenge to say these words; however, they realized the necessity of having a balance within their involvement both inside and outside of the workplace. Therefore, there is always going to be an unexpected task or something new that arises during the school day and it is important to prioritize and address it first thing in the morning when the new day arises. Further involvement outside of the necessary teacher duties is also important in the need to be involved in before-school and after-school activities to further build relationships with students and co-workers outside of the structured time in the school day. Participants conveyed the importance of how their extra-curricular involvement inside the workplace was influential in their lived experiences and resulted in fulfillment within the workplace, as they had the ability to shape their students' lives outside of the academic realm. A balance of professional and personal involvement inside and outside of the workplace is needed to sustain and ensure teacher retention.

Flexibility. Flexibility was significant within participants' lived experiences. Many of the participants conveyed the importance of flexibility in their lived experiences. Flexibility was a vital factor in teacher retention. Participants uncovered the factor of flexibility in their daily experiences both with personal reflections and student interactions. A teacher must maintain flexible in order to sustain in an urban turnaround school working environment by having a mindset of knowing that tomorrow is a new day and having teacher autonomy to adjust when

needed, which is a necessity to promote teacher retention. As a result of a new day, teachers have the opportunity to reflect, adjust, and conquer inside and outside of the workplace. It is apparent that flexibility must be implemented and practiced in an urban turnaround school environment to ensure teacher retention keeping at the forefront knowing that tomorrow is a new day and there is no one size fits all approach, which means delivering instruction and student learning must be scaffolded to meet academic, social, and behavioral needs of the students.

Self-care. Practicing and promoting self-care was an important factor in teacher participants' lived experiences. Participants practiced self-care through therapy, exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep, watching their favorite television series, and enjoying time with family and friends. Participants who practiced self-care experienced a balanced lifestyle of involvement and feelings of rejuvenation. Although taking time to practice self-care can be a conflicting challenge with scheduling, the participants conveyed the importance of setting aside time outside of their professional career. Practicing self-care is an important factor in the urban turnaround school environment, and the ability to care for others in the workplace. Teaching can be and has been exhausting at times for the study participants; however, they had the ability to persevere through the practice of self-care. Also, in the workplace, it is important for teachers to promote student self-care. One specific participant took additional time out of the teaching schedule to ensure student self-care by discussing what self-care consisted of and provided students with time to practice different calming strategies in order for her students to be able to become refocused on the rigorous curriculum. Furthermore, self-care needs to be promoted by leadership in the school environment as well. Everyone needs to be active in his or her roles to practice and promote self-care to ensure a positive education workplace.

Students. The focus on students was prominent in the data analysis of this study and in the existing literature. Teacher participants described a commitment to their students throughout this study. Although teacher participants stated students to be a challenge they remained because of their students, which consisted of past and present students. The participants were driven by their students' successes, which included academic, social, and behavioral successes. The majority of participants returned each school year because of their students. All teacher participants expressed their joy when they witnessed a "light bulb" moment regarding their students, and after all the invested time and persevering effort, their student or students grasped a learning concept. Although students were a challenge, participants shared how significant students were to teacher retention in their lived experiences. In the end, each participant was rejuvenated by his or her students' successes, which helped to revive his or her passion to teach. As stated previously, factors of teacher retention are represented across both research questions. More specifically, participants responses to research question two's essential elements shared a commonality of commitment to their students.

Support inside and outside of the workplace. All participants conveyed the importance of support inside and outside of the workplace. Support was uncovered as a necessary factor to teacher retention. More specifically, participants who had experienced supportive and collaborative leadership were more content in their workplaces. Participants who did not receive support inside the workplace from leadership experienced a disconnect in the workplace. Some participants shared the necessity of support as a team mindset. The work cannot be accomplished alone and receiving support inside the workplace is imperative to growing and developing professionally and personally. Additionally, participants attributed a supportive workplace to their co-workers. One participant experienced her support to be inside

the workplace due to her supportive co-workers. This participant only experienced support from co-workers because there was a disconnect with leadership in her school's environment. Others conveyed the importance of supportive co-workers and the importance of the ability to support one another throughout the successes and challenges.

In addition to support inside the workplace, support outside of the workplace was just as crucial. Participants experienced support outside of the workplace from family and friends and deemed this to be imperative to their successes and overcoming challenges. It is apparent there is a need for teachers to be supported both inside and outside of the workplace. Support is needed to withstand challenges in the workplace. It is necessary for co-workers, leadership, and other staff members to do their best to retain teachers by supporting them in their workplaces to help them combat challenges and remain in teaching. Support is an important factor in teacher retention.

Remembering the “why” of entering the profession. All participants shared their passion to educate children, especially in an urban educational workplace. All participants conveyed their passion through sharing their personal and professional lived experiences regarding their workplaces. At times the challenges were intense; therefore, participants mentioned how important it was to reflect on remembering their reasoning for teaching in an urban turnaround school. Through this reflection, participants shared that they were re-energized to continue to follow their passion to educate. Participants relied on their personal experiences as well to rejuvenate self and remembering their reasons for entering the profession. It is inevitable that challenges will continue to arise; therefore, it is imperative for teachers to continue to not only have found but also continue to pursue their passion to educate in an urban turnaround school environment.

Sustaining in an urban turnaround school environment. Participants in this study made changes inside the workplace and outside of the workplace to ensure they were practicing self-care, which has been demonstrated to provide feelings of rejuvenation, and the ability to become focused on the next new day. Participants who had their voices heard by leadership, co-workers, family, friends, and additional individuals regarding their involvement inside and outside of the workplace felt supported and genuinely involved both professionally and personally. Although, this involvement may add additional time working with school-aged children; the participants highlighted the importance of and how exciting it was for them to work outside of the hours in the school day. The majority of teacher involvement consisted of participants sharing their passion to educate children outside of their classroom in what they love to do. Participants shared their passion outside of their classrooms by coaching his or her favorite sport, tutoring, after-school programs, and being involved in the school and neighborhood communities. As a result of their involvement, participants were flexible regarding their ability to teach and learn both inside and outside of the workplace. Flexibility of lived experiences within the workplace and outside of the workplace were apparent not only for teacher autonomy but also for positive successes. Teachers play a significant role in the lives of everyone around them. Their significant role is a result of their involvement and flexibility.

It is apparent there is a need to be flexible inside of the workplace and outside of the workplace. Teachers have remained at his or her respective school, as a result of the difference they have made in past and present students' lives. They have even made a positive difference in future students' lives as they have taught their family members and family friends. Teachers who experienced a strong support system both inside and outside of the workplace remained content; therefore, they were part of a team taking on challenges and resulting in their further

successes. Positive support, whether it be from religious practice, co-workers, leadership, family, friends, and other individuals appear influential to their decisions to remain within urban turnaround schools. Participants shared the importance of their reflection in remembering why entered the teaching field in the first place, and as a result, were able to retain their passion to educate. Also, participant reflection of student growth from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year encouraged participants to follow their passion to continue to teach the following year.

Commitment. Participants in this study described their commitment to their respective school, past and present students, and within their classroom. All participants shared their commitments inside and outside of their workplaces. Two of the most significant findings of teacher commitment were due to leadership and students. The majority of the participants discussed their commitment to their school is due to the responsive leadership. One participant shared her commitment is a result of her supportive leadership, who has shown to believe in the teachers and students schoolwide. According to this participant, leadership will adjust if needed to better support the school. This teacher and the leadership shared the same beliefs as the participant and leadership shared the same school mission and values. One participant disagreed regarding the leadership; however, this participant was driven by her commitment to her past and present students. This participant's commitment was still strong; however, it was strong because of her students and supportive coworkers. Participants were committed due to both personal and professional factors. The personal factors included work ethic, strong conviction, and passion. The professional factors included students, leadership, co-workers, and team. As a result of their commitment, all teachers shared similar passions for their commitment and were in agreement that they would go above and beyond to ensure students' successes and schoolwide achievement

as they were committed personally and professionally to their school community. Commitment helped teacher participants return on a day-to-day basis and return the following school year. Although commitment has contributed to teacher retention it can also lead to teacher turnover. Teachers must be able to recognize the spectrum of their commitment and not be overly committed in order to assure good health. Teachers who are overly committed experienced lack of sleep, lack of self-care, and lack of nutritious eating.

Positive collaboration. All participants shared the importance of collaboration in their experience. Participants shared the significance of collaboration in their daily lives, and schoolwide. Collaboration happened among colleagues, other staff members, students, neighborhood communities, and leadership. The majority of teachers found collaboration to be important in improving their teaching practice and personal development. For example, some of the teachers mentioned that they shared resources with other teachers within the school, and one participant stated that she enjoys collaborating with teachers outside of her school. All teachers stated that they collaborate daily whether it be with a colleague, student, leadership, or another staff member. Some of the participants recognized their need to collaborate more due to their newly acquired awareness, because of the interviews, and thinking about their lived experience regarding the essential element of collaboration. One participant contributed her collaboration to be an introvert; however, at the conclusion of this interview, recognized the need to have stronger collaboration even though she was an introvert. Participants shared that collaboration was significant in their lives both personally and professionally. They expressed the positive benefits that collaboration had in their workplaces and in their lives. One participant also shared that collaboration does not consist of only speaking, but also being an active listener. To ensure positive collaboration, it is important to not only speak but also listen before an immediate

response. Lastly, all participants conveyed the importance of positive collaboration within the workplace and outside of the workplace, and how important positive collaboration was to their lived experiences. As a result, positive collaboration was important to teacher retention.

Relationship development. Existing research revealed that trusting and committed relationships are a result of positive collaboration (Brezicha et al., 2015; Gu, 2014). A participant found that relationships are formed, as a result of collaboration and the desire for students' successes. This participant found collaboration to be the first step of building a relationship, and then from this experience may be used to improve existing relationships. The participants in this study concurred that relationships are crucial, especially in the teaching environment. Participants shared that relationships are built among teachers, other staff members, students, leadership, and the neighborhood communities. Most of the participants shared that relationships were predominately positive, supportive, and collaborative. One participant shared the importance of leadership to focus on developing and fostering relationships with the staff, which will boost schoolwide morale and teacher involvement. Relationships were built and developed in various ways, which consisted of team-building exercises at the beginning of the school year, professional development activities, weekly meetings, icebreakers during meetings, staff outings, academic meetings, and during sports games. Overall, the findings revealed the relationships to be positive and shared as a community.

Although there are many ways to support relationship development in these urban turnaround school environments, many participants shared that these relationships fluctuate based on the time of the school year, and due to other unexpected changes in the educational environment. Thus, these relationships may be inconsistent and vary over time. Participants

agreed that they interact well with teachers and staff members; however, some participants shared that there has been a decline in relationships recently among co-workers and other staff members. Two participants expressed that relationship development has been less frequent, as other teachers in the participants' respective schools are focused on trying to keep up with the end of the year workload. As a result, there has been a disconnect with relationships due to the workload. Also, scheduling has limited the ability to build relationships. Due to the inconsistency experienced, some of the participants' felt overworked and exhausted. It is apparent the need for relationship development to be consistent and happen throughout the entirety of the school year in order to build and sustain the educational workplace.

Leadership. The essential element of leadership was significant to teachers' lived experiences. Teachers' commitment, collaboration, and relationship development were influenced based on their experiences with leadership. The reviewed literature has further supported the need of supportive administration (leadership) to be important to teacher retention because without support novice teachers and experienced teachers will leave (Bennett et al., 2013; You & Conley, 2015). The participants acknowledged that leadership is important in their teaching experience and how this has influenced their decisions. For example, some participants shared the importance of leadership leading by example and being there for teachers in whom to confide. It is apparent for most participants that leadership was invested not only in their teachers but the schoolwide community. Participants shared that due to strong leadership, they want to follow in their footsteps, and work as a team. The strongest leader works collectively with the teachers. Some participants declared that the leadership has each teacher join a team at the beginning of the school year, or participate in an after-school program, and as a result,

teachers have time to connect and work with other co-workers that they may not work alongside on a daily basis.

Furthermore, a few participants shared that the leadership at their respective schools asked the specific teacher what she would like to teach for after-school programs; therefore, the teacher was able to share her talents with others in the workplace. For example, one teacher loves board games, so she started a board game club as an after-school program. Another teacher started a book club, and another teacher started a museum program. The participants experienced more enjoyment due to the school involvement from both teachers and leadership, as a result of active involvement.

Although participants shared the importance of leadership, it was also apparent in the results the need for leadership to see a teacher as not only a teacher but as a person. Participants conveyed that even though the leadership listens to the respective individual, the leadership must remain genuine. Another participant mentioned a disconnection between the leadership and teachers. She did not feel supported by administration and found the approach to be more one-sided than an approach with a team mindset. As a result of this, she more than likely will not return the following year. There must be a balance in order for teachers to not feel overworked and stressed, which are factors that contribute to teacher burnout. Leadership was essential to teachers' lived experiences and how the workplace was experienced by their leaders. Leadership influenced the overall school thus, leadership contributes to teacher retention. As stated in Chapter 4, Participant D expressed, "Whoever leads the school creates the culture of that school and if that person is organized the school will be organized." It is apparent that supportive leadership is an important factor in teacher retention.

Culture and climate. Participants agreed that the overall culture and climate were satisfactory at their schools; however, challenges did persist. One participant described the culture and climate to be calm and sustainable, due to leadership and collaboration; however, the process of onboarding new staff, as a result of teacher turnover, disrupts the calm culture and climate. Another participant mentioned that the culture and climate varied, as a result of the inconsistency of the school community and neighborhood community. Although these challenges persist, it was evident that all participants agreed that consistency within the urban turnaround school environment, dedicated staff, collaboration, and teamwork to be significant to combat these challenges in the culture and climate. It is important for leadership to have clear expectations and a shared collaborative community for all teachers and staff members. The findings revealed that everyone must persevere through the challenges and negatives to reach the positives. It is important to also have collective stamina schoolwide to ensure a consistent and collaborative culture and climate. Everyone must collectively share the urban turnaround school's priorities and goals and carry them out from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.

All participants in this study shared the importance of each essential element, and the significance of all elements intertwined into their lived experiences as being crucial to the teaching environment. The participants believed that all essential elements were important in their lives, and into their personal lives as well as their professional lives. For example, Participant F shared, "I understand these as helping me grow in my life, and I have realized the importance of these, and how it has transferred over into other areas of my life." Each essential element is a building block to the next essential element, and to a positive, sustaining, and transforming the educational workplace. Also, this researcher asserts that based on the

participant responses that these essential elements combined can negate turnover and promote a better educational environment as each element was significant to teachers' lived experiences. These essential elements will be beneficial to encouraging teachers throughout the teaching environment in order for them to grow, foster, and develop relationships. These relationships also encourage a team mindset. It is evident that there is a need for an implementation of a structured pathway in the education environment in overcoming inconsistency and to make a positive transformation for leadership and teachers in the workplace and continue to grow, develop, and foster relationships, thus, may be implemented as a plan to improve, promote, and sustain teacher retention, especially in urban turnaround schools. However, these essential elements will not be effective unless they are implemented with fidelity and consistency from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. The results of this study revealed how significant the essential elements were to teachers' lived experiences and, as a result, contributed to teacher retention.

Discussion of Results in Relation to the Literature

The identified gap in the literature consisted of experienced teachers, specifically in urban turnaround schools, sharing their lived experiences, and understandings of what attributes influence teacher retention, perhaps to decrease teacher turnover. To close this gap in the reviewed literature, researchers must continue to investigate teachers' commitment in hard-to-staff schools and develop an understanding of their stories and reasons for teacher retention (Bennett et al., 2013). The purpose of this phenomenological study addressed the positives of teacher retention throughout urban turnaround schools in a city in the Midwest and what factors contribute to teacher retention. This study focused on teachers' lived experiences and factors that have led to their decisions to remain in the workplace and helped to fill a gap in the literature

related to understanding why teachers choose to remain in urban turnaround schools, and how the essential elements of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention. Also, this study explored the positives of experienced teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools. The results of this study will not only relate to the literature, but they also add to the community of practice, and to the community of scholars. This researcher will present both practical and academic connections to the literature and the wider community.

This study explored participants' lived experiences who have at least four years of teaching experience. This study provided qualitative data, as a result of a questionnaire and two interviews totaling approximately 120 minutes with each of the participants. The study results are significant not only for teachers, but also for leadership, other staff members, and individuals who oversee the urban turnaround schools. Furthermore, the study results can extend beyond urban turnaround schools to remediate any educational workplace through the implementation of the essential elements of the relational cultural theory. The results of this study identified specific factors of teacher retention and how influential factors are to teachers' decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools. Additionally, these results highlighted the essential elements of the relational cultural theory and how they contribute to teacher retention.

In this study, participants shared their lived experiences and through their lived experiences uncovered professional and personal factors. This study results shared similarities to those of Kirkpatrick and Johnson (2014) and Bennett et al. (2013), which focused on experienced teachers and their engagement in the workplace. These researchers presented that teachers build their confidence and competency on an annual basis. The researchers presented only results based on teachers' experiences and their involvement inside the workplace; however, did not address their involvement outside of the workplace. Although this study shared similarities with

these researchers, it also added onto the literature as it uncovered the necessity of teacher involvement of their commitments outside of the workplace and the importance of practicing self-care and balancing professional and personal involvement. The results relate to the importance of having a balanced professional and personal lifestyle in the workplace.

Cucchiara et al. (2013) studied factors that attributed to teacher attrition. Their study presented demanding working conditions, lack of support, lack of consistency, lack of shared instructional expectations, and lack of additional support structures to be contributing factors to teacher attrition. Their study presented these factors to be a challenge for teachers; however, they also shared the need to further conduct research on urban turnaround schools. The results of their study related to this researcher's study as participants stated these to be challenges as well in their lived experiences and further shared how they have overcome the present challenges. The results relate to understanding not only the challenges that are present but also the significance of combating challenges.

Urick and Bowers (2014) and Brezicha et al. (2015) studied different types of leadership and leadership support. They presented the different types of leadership styles and agreed that there is a need for school leaders to continue to collaborate to understand their teaching staff and be able to support teacher development through differentiated supports based on teacher needs. This study shared similarities regarding the imperative role that leadership has in the workplace. Furthermore, this study adds onto these researchers' studies as this study presented teachers' lived experiences and can aid in understanding specific ways for leadership to engage and support teachers to promote cohesion based on the essential elements of the relational cultural theory.

In addition, relationships and support were prominent in the literature. Alvarez and Lazzari (2016), Brezicha et al. (2015), Doney (2013), and Gu (2014) presented the significance of relationships and support to teacher attrition and teacher retention; however, the literature did not uncover the next steps for further investigation, way to remediate, and transform challenges experienced by teachers in urban schools, especially those who teach in urban turnaround schools. Neumerski (2013) stated, “To address these shortcomings, we may need to do more than put the principal, teacher, and coaching literatures in conversation with one another” (p.334). The current results relate to the need to have more than a conversation to address challenges in urban schools, especially in urban turnaround schools to improve, promote, and sustain teacher retention. In this study, the researcher determined the importance the essential elements of RCT are to teachers in an educational environment and how they have contributed to teacher retention.

Researchers have studied the significance and benefits of RCT in the literature and how RCT had been helpful to grow, foster, and develop healthy relationship development in the social work environment and the psychology environment. The researchers presented how human relationships were improved, as a result of, the implementation of the five essential elements of RCT within the social work and psychology environments (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Anyikwa et al., 2015; East & Roll, 2015). The five essential elements were comprised of the following: sense of zest or energy; increased sense of worth; clarity, which is knowledge of self and others in a relationship; productivity, which is taking action inside and outside of the relationship; and desire for more connection, which is seeking additional relational experiences. The researchers presented the essential elements as important to providing a positive transformation of growing

and developing healthy relationships and are steps in the pathway to mutual development (McCauley, 2013).

The relational cultural theory (RCT) has been presented throughout the study as a framework comprised of building connections to grow, foster, and develop relationships based on the five essential elements. The literature revealed the importance of relationships as significant to teacher turnover and teacher retention; however, the literature did not reveal a pathway for next steps for remediation or continued improvement. This researcher's study added to the literature as it is focused on the essential elements of RCT; however, a major difference is the essential elements were reframed based on specific educational themes gathered from reframing the five essential elements of RCT, which consisted of commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate to meet educational criteria. In addition, the results of this study based on the essential elements of RCT relates to the community and community of scholars as a specific and structured pathway in order to improve, promote, and sustain workplace environments. The results relate to the community and the community of scholars as the essential elements can be implemented and used as a remediation plan to decrease the high rates of workplace staff or teacher turnover and build a healthy and sustainable environment.

Limitations

Once the researcher concluded this study, she found a limitation to be a smaller sample size than projected. Due to the high rates of teacher turnover as the reviewed literature revealed, this limited the ability to recruit additional participants for this study; however, a sufficient sample size for the study's design was recruited. Another limitation to this study was the number of turnaround schools for recruitment purposes of teachers who met the specified

criteria. An additional limitation to this study was the researcher was employed within an urban turnaround school. To prevent personal bias this researcher used epoche to mitigate potential bias and preconceptions. A limitation to this study was the recruitment and data gathered from all female participants. Another limitation was the time commitment as this study consisted of an open-ended questionnaire and two interviews. Lastly, all findings were dependent on participants sharing honest and accurate lived experiences, and this researcher used member checking to ensure credible results.

Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

The implication of the results for practice, policy, and theory in this study may be significant to the educational workplace. More specifically, this study's results may be used as a positive remediation of next steps driven by practice, policy, and theory to overcome the challenges of teacher turnover in the workplace and promote teacher retention. Due to all the demanding working conditions and challenges in the educational environment, it is vital to understand how and why teachers are able to remain resilient to ensure retention (Gu, 2014). The participants in this study described their lived experiences in relation to teacher retention, their desire to continue to grow and develop in their practice, and the importance of relationships.

Furthermore, Participant F had the greatest number of years teaching, which consisted of 11 years. The findings were significant regarding her experience as this participant was extremely committed; however, in her experience she had the ability to recognize not only her level of commitment, but she was able to find a balance inside and outside of the workplace between her professional and personal obligations in life. She did not feel overwhelmed or overworked with her teacher duties. Also, Participant F had an increased self-worth, in terms of how she collaborates; however, her collaboration had decreased since the beginning of her

teaching career outside of her respective classroom, as a result of teacher attrition at her school. Regarding her ability and motivation to take action leadership was important, and she voiced her praise for and concerns with leadership; however, she did not always speak up in her earlier years. She had the ability not only to recognize the importance of the essential elements of RCT, but she had a balance in her professional and personal life because of her years of teaching experience. Participant F found these essential elements of RCT to be not only part of her personal life, but helped her to meet her professional goals in life. The findings had important implications regarding the levels of teaching experience and finding a balance inside and outside of the workplace.

Researchers have found that even though a teacher is considered an experienced teacher, he or she needs to be supported to grow and develop in learning and teaching (Appova & Arbaugh, 2017; Tricarico et al., 2015). Participant E was an experienced teacher and the findings revealed that she experienced commitment, positive collaboration, and leadership to be negative based on her lived experience. As a result, this finding supports the need for positive change and support in her respective workplace in order for her to become rejuvenated. She needs to be supported to have the ability to grow and develop in her learning and teaching. Support could come from leadership in the workplace, which as a result, could further promote a positive change in the teaching environment.

The teacher participants highlighted the need to have the opportunity to further grow and develop. Furthermore, conditions need to be created for both the teacher and leadership to encourage relationships beyond peer-to-peer relationships, thus it is important for leadership to also have the opportunity to further grow and develop both inside and outside of the workplace. The results of this study may influence professional development and inform all respective

parties in educational workplaces, specifically urban turnaround schools. To retain teachers, professional development must not only be accessible but also applicable. Though, there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach for teachers, leaders, and students. The results of this study may be influential to the educational workplaces as a means for teachers to grow, foster, and develop relationships based on the five essential elements of RCT. This researcher plans to inform and teach professional developments regarding the necessity and implementation of the results, centered on the essential elements of RCT. The implementation of RCT into education will be used to support teachers in the workplace and improve teacher retention by initiating a plan and a purposeful fulfillment for which leaders, leadership, teachers, academic leaders, and school district personnel may strive.

In addition, practice informs policy. Through structured professional development opportunities, leadership and teachers may create a handbook and implement the essential elements into the workplace by using the handbook as a resource to reflect and operate on the overall environment. The participants in this study found all the essential elements to not only be important in their professional experiences but also in their personal experiences. The RCT essential elements can further inform school district leadership as a way to share the benefits of the essential elements of RCT and the importance of a structured pathway to build relationships in the workplace based on the framework of the theory. The reviewed literature revealed how important relationships are to the workplace (Brezicha et al., 2015; Gu, 2014).

The participants in this study highlighted specific moments in their lived experiences, which were focused on their relationships whether that be with religious practice, family, friends, co-workers, leadership, past colleagues, and additional supportive individuals in their lives. Building relationships is innate and the relational cultural theory may be used as a way to reduce

negative interactions in workplaces and be used to further foster, grow, and develop relationships in varied workplaces based on their needs.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study may be used as a guide for further research in different capacities. First, this study could be replicated with different levels of teaching consisting of high schools and higher education. Replication among different levels of teaching could consist of both novice teachers and experienced teachers in urban turnaround schools, and if the factors uncovered are similar or different based on the level of experience. Also, future researchers could explore teachers' lived experiences at a high school level and at a higher education level to determine if and how the essential elements of RCT may contribute to different levels of teaching. Relationships are important to workplaces and further research can be used to explore similarities and/or differences among teachers across a wider variety of grade levels. Expanding the time frame and extending it through the entirety of the academic school year to collect data of participant voices in each quarter is recommended. Then review the data to determine if and how the different quarters of the school year may influence teachers' lived experiences. Also, further research could be focused on similarities and/or differences between female and male teachers regarding his and her lived experiences in urban turnaround schools. In addition, further research could be focused on similarities and/or differences between teachers' lived experiences in urban turnaround schools and rural turnaround schools. Further studies could focus explicitly on the reframed essential elements of the relational cultural theory in the educational workplace and how these elements have transformed the workplace over an extended period of at least three years.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore factors that teachers ascribed to teacher retention and the influence the factors had on their decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools. The foremost purpose of the study explored how the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contributed to teacher retention. The results and findings of this study confirmed that the essential elements commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contributed to teacher retention through describing the importance of these elements and, the significance they have on teacher retention. These findings are confirmed by existing research and add new insights into the field of education, explicitly focused on the importance of relationships in the workplace centered on the five essential elements of the relational cultural theory. This researcher believes teachers exhibiting these five elements may be attributed to the success of urban turnaround schools when these elements are collectively working together towards maintaining a successful teaching environment. Also, this study may be important as these essential elements may be used as a specific and structured pathway in order to improve, promote, and sustain teacher retention, and may be used as a remediation to decrease the high rates of teacher turnover, especially in urban turnaround schools.

Additionally, teacher participants who are deemed experienced teachers shared their lived experiences to inform leadership, co-workers, and respective individuals outside of the workplace of what they have ascribed to teacher retention. Therefore, the study revealed the importance of teacher involvement, flexibility, self-care, students, support inside and outside of

the workplace, and remembering the “why” of entering the profession and how they have been influential to remaining in the workplace and overcoming challenges.

The findings supported the significance of self-care, and the need for teachers to have a work-life balance to continue to persevere within urban turnaround schools. Another significant finding was the need for consistency within the workplace, and the environment for both students and teachers was important to participants’ lived experiences. Therefore, consistency shouldn’t be changing throughout the school year, but remain intact with the overall mission, values, and goals at the forefront. It was apparent the need for structured changes and the significance of ensuring consistency. Furthermore, to implement structured changes, support, and relationships are crucial inside and outside of the workplace. A growth-mindset is important to continue in the workplace environment and to accept the necessary changes and work as a team to overcome challenges and continue to build on successes.

A remediation consisting of changes is a necessity within the urban educational workplace, especially in urban turnaround schools. Making changes will allow for creating sustainable and positive relationships and build healthy connections in the workplace, which in turn may advocate for teacher retention.

References

- Adams, C. M., Ware, J. K., Miskell, R. C., & Forsyth, P. B. (2016). Self-regulatory climate: A positive attribute of public schools. *The Journal of Education Research, 109*(2), 169-180. doi:10.1080/002206712014934419
- Adoniou, M. (2016). Beginning teachers' responses to education reform agenda. *School Leadership & Management, 36*(1), 80–95. doi:10.1080/1363243420161160212
- Alshenqeeti, H. (2014). Interviewing as a data collection method: A critical review. *English Linguistics Research, 3*(1), 39–45. doi:10.5430/elr.v3n1p39
- Alvarez, A., & Lazzari, M. M. (2016). Feminist mentoring and relational cultural theory: A case example of implications. *Journal of Women and Social Work, 31*(1), 41–54. doi:10.1177/0886109915612512
- Annum, G. (2017). *Research instruments for data collection*. Retrieved from http://campus.educadium.com/newmediart/file.php/137/Thesis_Repository/recds/assets/TWs/UgradResearch/ResMethgen/files/notes/resInstrsem1.pdf
- Anyikwa, V. A., Chiarelli-Helminiak, C. M., Hodge, D. M., & Wells-Wilbon, R. (2015). Women empowering women. *Journal of Social Work Education, 51*(4), 723–737. doi:10.1080/1043779720151076283
- Appova, A., & Arbaugh, F. (2017). Teachers' motivation to learn: Implications for supporting professional growth. *Professional Development in Education, 44*(1), 5–21. doi:10.1080/19415257
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

- Bennett, S. V., Brown, J. J., Kirby-Smith, A., & Severson, B. (2013). Influences of the heart: Novice and experienced teachers remaining in the field. *Teacher Development*, 17(4), 562–576. doi:10.1080/136645302013849613
- Bland, P., Church, E., & Luo, M. (2014). Strategies for attracting and retaining teachers. *Administrative Issues Journal, Education, Practice, and Research*, 4(1), 1–10.
- Brezicha, K., Bergmark, U., & Mitra, D. L. (2015). One size does not fit all: Differentiating leadership to support teachers in school reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 51(1), 96–132. doi:10.1177/001316114521632
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Carr, M. L., Holmes, W., & Flynn, K. (2017). Using mentoring, coaching, and self-mentoring to support public school educators. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 90(4), 116–124. doi:10.1080/00098655
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter One: The selection of a research approach. In J. W. Creswell, *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, p. 3–23. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Cucchiara, M. B., Rooney, E., & Robertson-Kraft, C. (2013). "I've never seen people work so hard!" Teachers' working conditions in the early stages of school turnaround. *Urban Education* 50(3), 259–287. doi:10.1177/0042085913501896

- Doney, P. A. (2013). Fostering resilience: A necessary skill for teacher retention. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 24(4), 645–664. doi:10.1007/109720129324
- Dou, D., Devos, G., & Valcke, M. (2016). The relationships between school autonomy gap, principal leadership, teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Educational Management & Leadership*, 45(6), 959–977. doi:10.1177/17411432216653975
- East, J. F., & Roll, S. J. (2015). Women, poverty, and trauma: An empowerment practice approach. *Social Work*, 60(4), 279–286. doi:10.1093/sw/swv030
- Eldor, L., & Shoshani, A. (2017). Are you being served? The relationship between school climate for service and teachers' engagement, satisfaction, and intention to leave: A moderate mediation model. *The Journal of Psychology*, 151(4), 359–378. doi:10.1080/00223980
- Finlay, L. (2012). Unfolding the phenomenological research process: Iterative stages of seeing afresh. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 53(2), 172–201. doi:10.1177/0022167812453877
- Ford, T. G., & Ware, J. K. (2016, July 7). Teacher self-regulatory climate: Conceptualizing an indicator of leader support for teacher learning and development. *Leadership and Policy in Schools [online]*, 1–25. doi:10.1080/15700763
- Gaikhorst, L., Beishuizen, J., Roosenboom, B., & Volman, M. (2017). The challenges of beginning teachers in urban primary schools. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(1), 46–61. doi:10.10800261976820161251900
- Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. (2018) The effects of working conditions on teacher retention, *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(6), 604-625, doi:10.1080/13540602.2018.1457524

- Gordon, E., & Lowrey, K. A. (2016). The mentoring web- coming together to make a difference. *Improving Schools*, 20(2), 1–13. doi:10.1177/1365480216650310
- Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Greenlee, B. J., & Brown, J. J. (2009). Retaining teachers in challenging schools. *Education*, 130(1), 96–109.
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 1–26. doi:10.1177/160940690400300104
- Gu, Q. (2014). The role of relational resilience in teachers' career-long commitment and effectiveness. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 20(5), 502–529. doi:10.1080/135406022014937964
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. doi:10.1037//0003-066x.44.3.513
- Hughes, A., S. (2016). *Mixed methods research*. *APS Observer* [online], 29(5), 38–39.
- Hughes, A., Matt, J., & O'Reilly, F. (2015). Principal support is imperative to the retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(1), 129–134. doi:10.11114/jets.v3il.622
- Husserl, E. (1931) *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*, trans. Gilson W. R. B. New York, NY: Humanities Press, Original work published 1913.
- Jones, B. K. (2016). Enduring in an impossible occupation: Perfectionism and commitment to teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 67(5), 437–446. doi:10.117/0022487116668021
- Keddie, A. (2016). School autonomy as the way of the future: Issues of equity, public purpose and moral leadership. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 44(5), 713–727. doi:10.1177/1741143214559231

- Kirkpatrick, C. L., & Johnson, S. M. (2014). Ensuring the ongoing engagement of second-stage teachers. *J Educ Change* 15(1), 231–252. doi:10.1007/1083301492313
- Klar, H. W., & Brewer, C. A. (2013). Successful leadership in high-needs schools: An examination of core leadership practices enacted in challenging contexts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 49(5), 768–808. doi:10.1177/001316113482577
- Knell, P. F., & Castro, A. J. (2014). Why people choose to teach in urban schools: The case for a push-pull factor analysis. *The Educational Forum*, 78(2), 150–163. doi:10.1080/001317252013878775
- Malen, B., & Rice, J. K. (2004) A framework for assessing the impact of education reforms on school capacity: Insights from studies of high-stakes accountability initiatives. *Educational Policy*, 18, 631–660.
- Martin, K. L., Buelow, S. M., & Hoffman, J. T. (2015). New teacher induction: Support that impacts beginning middle-level educators. *Middle School Journal*, 47(1), 4–12. doi:10.1080/00940771.2016.1059725
- McCarley, T., Peters, M. L., & Decman, J. M. (2014). Transformational leadership related to school climate: a multi-level analysis. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 44(2), 322–342. doi:10.1177/1741143214549966
- McCauley, M. (2013). *Relational cultural theory: Fostering healthy coexistence through a relational lens*. In G. Burgess and H. Burgess (eds), *Beyond intractability*. Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Retrieved from <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/relational-cultural-theory>

- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods* (3rd. ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Miller, J. B. (1976). *Toward a new psychology for women*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Moate, J. (2014). A narrative account of a teacher community. *Teacher Development*, 18(3), 384–402. doi:10.1080/136645302014931294
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Neumerski, C. (2013). Rethinking instructional leadership, a review: What do we know about principal, teacher, and coach instructional leadership, and where should we go from here? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 49(2), 310–347. doi:10.1177/001316112456700
- Nichols, S. L., Schutz, P. A., Rodgers, K., & Bilica, K. (2017). Early career teachers' emotions and emerging teacher identities. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 23(4), 406–421. doi:10.1080/1354060220161211099
- Oder, T., & Eisenschmidt, E. (2016). Teachers' perceptions of school climate as an indicator of their beliefs of effective teaching. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 48(1), 3–20. doi:10.1080/0305764
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Quinn, B. (2013). Reflexivity and education for public managers. *Teaching Public Administration*, 31(1), 6–17. doi:10.1177/0144739413478961
- Reyes, A., & Garcia, A. (2014). Turnaround policy and practice: A case study of turning around a failing school with English-language-learners. *The Urban Review; Dordrecht*, 46(3), 349–371. doi:10.1007/s1125601302616

- Rinke, C. R., & Mawhinney, L. (2017). Insights from teacher leavers: Push and pull in career development. *Teaching Education*, 28(4), 360–375. doi:10.1080/10476210
- Ronfeldt, M. (2015). Field placement schools and instructional effectiveness. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 66(4), 304–320. doi:10.1177/0022487115592463
- Saiti, A. (2015). Conflicts in schools, conflict management styles and the role of the school leader: A study of Greek primary school educators. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 43(4), 582–609. doi:10.1177/1741143214523007
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Sanjari, M., Bahramnezhad, F., Fomani, F., Shoghi, M., & Cheraghi, M. (2014). Ethical challenges of researchers in qualitative studies: The necessity to develop a specific guideline. *Journal of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine*, 7, 14–19. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4263394/>
- Savenye, W. C., & Robinson, R. S. (2013). Qualitative research issues and methods: An introduction for educational technologists. In D. Jonassen, *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology*. Retrieved from <http://www.aect.org/edtech/39.pdf>
- Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College.
- Smith, J. (2015). The phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading. *Philosophy and phenomenological research*. 90(2), 274–293. doi:10.1111/phpr.2015.90.issue-2/issuetoc
- Strunk, K. O., Marsh, J. A., Hashim, A. K., & Bush-Mecenas, S. (2016). Innovation and a return to the status quo: A mixed methods of school reconstitution. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 38(3), 549–577. doi:10.3102/0162373716642517

- Jacob, A., Vidyarthi, E., & Carroll, K. (2012). The irreplaceable: Understanding the real retention crisis in America's urban schools. *The Education Digest; Ann Arbor*, 78(6), 58–62. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED533959.pdf>
- Thibodeaux, A. K., Labat, M. B., Lee, D. E., & Labat, C. A. (2015). The effects of leadership and high-stakes testing on teacher retention. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, 19(1), 227–249. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED557520>
- Tricarico, K. M., Jacobs, J., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2015). Reflection on their first five years of teaching: Understanding staying and impact power. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*. 21(3), 237–259. doi:10.1080/135406022014953821
- Urlick, A., & Bowers, A. J. (2014). What are the different types of principals across the United States? A latent class analysis of principal perception of leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 50(1), 96–134. doi:10.1177/00131613489019
- Vagle, M. D. (2014). *Crafting phenomenological research*. New York, NY: Left Coast Press.
- Van Manen, M. (2014). *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Whipp, J. L., & Geronime, L. (2017). Experiences that predict early career teacher commitment to and retention in high-poverty urban schools. *Urban Education*, 52(7), 799–828. doi:10.177/0042085915574531
- Wieczorek, D., & Theoharis, G. (2015, Dec). "We're going to make lemonade out of lemons": Urban principals, emotion, and take to the top implementation. *NASSP Bulletin*, 99(4), 281–303. doi:10.1177/0192636516636960

- Yirci, R., Ozdemir, T. Y., Kartal, S. E., & Kocabas, I. (2014). Teachers' perceptions regarding school principals' coaching skills. *School Leadership & Management*, 34(5), 454–469. doi:10.1080/13632434
- You, S., & Conley, S. (2015). Workplace predictors of secondary school teachers' intention to leave. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(4), 561–581. doi:10.1177/1741143214535741
- Young, S. (2018) Teacher retention and student achievement: How to hire and retain effective teachers. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 84(3), 16-21.
- Zeichner, K. (2014). The struggle for the soul of teaching and teacher education in the USA. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 40(5), 551–568. doi:10.1080/02607476

Appendix A: Participant Questionnaire

Teacher Questionnaire				
Instructions: Please read through the following questions first and answer the following questions to your best ability. If uncomfortable answering a specific question you may leave it blank.				
Have you taught for a minimum of 4 years?	Circle:	Yes	or	No
Ethnicity/Race:				
Age:				
Gender:				
When did you realize that you wanted to become a teacher?				
How long have you taught in this specific geographical location?				
How would you describe yourself as a teacher?				
Describe what being a teacher means to you.				
In your experience what has been the most rewarding moment in your teaching career thus far? Describe this rewarding experience in detail.				
Do you have any aspirations to become a principal or a coach? Why or why not?				
How long have you been in your current role? Do you foresee changing grade levels?				
Are you satisfied with your involvement in your respective urban turnaround school environment?				
What has helped you to sustain teaching in an urban turnaround school environment?				

Appendix B: Interview Protocol/Script

Date:

Time:

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Location:

Length of Interview:

Opening/Purpose of the Interview: First, I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. The purpose of this interview is to explore and understand your in-depth lived experiences as an experienced teacher in an urban turnaround school environment and to collect information pertaining to your decision to remain in your respective urban turnaround school. The second interview will be focused on if and how the criteria of the Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) may contribute to teacher retention. We will meet a total of two times and interview questions will remain focused on the phenomenon of teacher retention and the criteria of RCT. The interview atmosphere will remain open, concise, and positive. With that being said, if questions stray from the interview script we will remain focused on the sharing of your lived experiences. However, if at anytime I see that you are uncomfortable, or you would like to pass a question you may do so. Confidentiality, safety, and wellbeing are my top priorities. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Research Question 1: *To what factors do experienced teachers in urban turnaround schools ascribe teacher retention and how have these factors influenced their decisions to remain in urban turnaround schools?*

Possible Questions for Interview One (Focus on Lived Experiences): Thanks again for meeting me and participating in this study.

1. What interested you in participating in this study?
2. Describe if and how long have you known that you wanted to be a teacher.
3. Where did you complete your student teaching experience? Describe your credentials. Do you have any other past experiences such as participating in school events, performances, or programs as a youth?
4. Do you have any other experiences such as summer programs, camp counseling, tutoring, and/or coaching? How have these past experiences shaped the teacher you've become?
5. Describe your teaching experience and the amount of years taught. What do you like and dislike?
6. What does your typical day of teaching in an urban turnaround school look like?
7. What has been your favorite part of teaching in an urban turnaround school? Why?
8. What are some challenges you've encountered in your current teaching environment? How would you describe these challenges?

9. How do you react to these challenges?
10. Why do you think these challenges occur? Describe if and how you overcome these challenges.
11. How can a school support you in overcoming these challenges?
12. What is happening when your school day ends with feelings of accomplishment?
13. At the end of the teaching day and at the end of the school year, what makes you return the following day or at the start of the new school year?
14. Given what you stated about your life experiences leading up to being a teacher in an urban turnaround school and given what you have said about being a teacher now in an urban turnaround school, how do you understand teacher retention in your life? Why do you think that is? What has helped you to sustain teaching in an urban turnaround school environment?

Research Question 2: How do the criteria commitment, positive collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate of the relational cultural theory contribute to teacher retention?

Possible Questions for Interview Two (Focus on Relational Cultural Theory):

Prior to the start of the next interview, the opening/purpose will be restated to ensure confidentiality of this study, wellbeing, and rights of participants. Thanks again for meeting me and participating in this study. I will start by going over the interview transcript from the first interview to ensure that the data gathered is accurate, credible, and valid. I will allow time for participant to ask me any questions in regards to their understanding of the RCT.

1. What is your involvement in the workplace and outside of the workplace? How do you feel about this involvement?
2. Describe your commitment, collaboration, and building relationships in your current teaching environment. What factors attribute to your commitment and collaboration? How is collaboration exhibited in your workplace?
3. Describe the relationships in your current teaching environment. How do you feel about these? How are relationships built in your workplace?
4. Describe the leadership in your current teaching environment. What aspects do you like and dislike?
5. How do you understand collaboration, relationship building, and leadership in your life? What sense does it make to you?
6. Describe the culture and climate in your current teaching environment. What factors attribute to a positive culture and climate? What factors do you think may contribute to a consistent culture and climate? Why do you think this is?
7. Given what you have stated throughout these interviews, where do you see yourself in the future? Why?

Guiding Question Probes: So you are saying...Is that a correct summary?

Can you tell me more about that?

Can you give me a specific example?

How did others respond to that?

Why was that important to you?

Why does that stand out in your memory?

How did you feel about that?

What was the significance to you?

How has your approach changed over time...what motivated this change?

It has been stated that...what do you think?

I'd like to understand more about how this topic relates directly to the earlier topic discussed?

Conclusion: Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me today. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions or concerns? After further review, I will send you a copy of the transcribed results from the final interview for your approval. Also, I will send an overview of the final transcription report for the two interviews for your review. Thanks for your time.

Appendix C: Interview Log

Date of Interview (mm/dd/yyyy)	Time of Interview (00:00 AM/PM)	How Many Minutes for Interview?	Interview Focus (History, Lived Experiences, or Making Sense)	Questions asked by interviewee

Appendix D: Consent Form

Concordia University – Portland Institutional Review Board
Approved: March 27, 2018; will Expire: March 22, 2019

CONSENT FORM

Research Study Title: Experienced Teachers' Perceptions in Urban Turnaround Schools
Principal Investigator: Nicole Holsted
Research Institution: Concordia University- Portland
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Barbara Weschke

Purpose and what you will be doing:

The purpose of this questionnaire and interview series is to explore trends regarding experienced teachers' experiences in turnaround school environments and how these experiences can influence teacher retention focused on the five essential components of the relational cultural theory. The five essential components within the relational cultural theory are commitment, collaboration, relationship development, leadership, culture, and climate. We expect approximately 12 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on March 27, 2018 and end enrollment on August 27, 2018. To be in the study, you will be asked to answer an open-ended questionnaire. Upon completion of the questionnaire and meeting the specified criteria you will be asked to participate in two audio-recorded interviews with the researcher, for approximately 60-90 minutes each. During the interviews, the participants will focus on their history of life, lived experiences, and construct meaning from these experiences. You will also have the opportunity to review interview transcripts and the entirety of data collected "member checking" prior to the analysis of the data and conclusions of the research study. Doing these things should take less than 5 hours of your time.

Risks:

There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, I will protect your information. I Nicole Holsted, will record interviews. The recording will be transcribed by me. Then, as soon as the transcript is checked for accuracy, the recording will be deleted when the transcription is completed. Any data you provide will be coded so people who are not the investigator cannot link your information to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption on my password protected computer locked inside the cabinet in my office. The recording will be deleted as soon as possible; all other study documents will be kept secure for 3 years and then be destroyed.

Benefits:

Information you provide will help explore common trends that experienced teachers possess and whether or not these trends influence experienced teachers' perceptions in regards to teacher retention. You could benefit this by gaining a greater understanding for the workplace and what you already contribute to the workplace and what notions you bring to current and future teachers.

Confidentiality:

This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions.

Contact Information:

You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Nicole Holsted (email holstedn@gmail.com or call ~~503-493-6390~~). If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obbranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

Participant Name

Date

Participant Signature

Date

Investigator Name

Date

Investigator Signature

Date



Investigator: Nicole Holsted email: holstedn@gmail.com
c/o: Dr. Barbara Weschke
Concordia University – Portland
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, Oregon 97221

Appendix E: Participant Demographics

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

Teacher Pseudonym Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity/Race	Years of Teaching Experience
Participant A	Female	33	Hispanic	5 years
Participant B	Female	30	White	7 years
Participant C	Female	28	African American	5 years
Participant D	Female	29	White	5 years
Participant E	Female	26	White	4 years
Participant F	Female	34	African American	11 years
Participant G	Female	27	African American	4 years

Note: Participants years of teaching experience ranged from 4 years to 11 years.

Appendix F: Representation of Participant Responses of RCT

Table 2.

Participants' Responses to the Essential Elements of RCT

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Commitment	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Positive Collaboration	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Relationship Development	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Leadership	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Culture & Climate	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Note: Participants' responses consisted of positive (+) and/or negative (-) experiences. All seven participants described their lived experiences through each essential element.

Appendix G: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously- researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does “fraudulent” mean?

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

What is “unauthorized” assistance?

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University- Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta

Digital Signature

Nicole Holsted Ciancetta

Name (Typed)

10/30/2018

Date